

THE CORRECTED REPORT
OF THE
DEBATES AND DECISIONS
OF THE
ADJOURNED MEETING
OF
Wesleyan-Methodist Delegates

HELD AT

SHEFFIELD,

FROM JULY 30, TO AUGUST 7, 1835;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

AN OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING,
THE APPEAL OF THE DELEGATES TO THE MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST
SOCIETIES, AND EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS ADDRESSED
TO THE DELEGATES, AND TO THE OFFICERS
OF THE ASSOCIATION.

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POOL; AND BOOKSELLERS IN GENERAL.

1835.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

REPORT,

&c. &c.

On Thursday evening, the Delegates from various parts of the kingdom, began to arrive in Sheffield. They met in the Chapel of the Protestant Methodists, in Surrey-street, adjoining the Music Hall. After solemn prayer for the divine blessing, some preliminary arrangements were made relative to the mode of transacting the future business of the meeting.

FRIDAY, JULY 31.

At six o'clock on Friday morning, a meeting for prayer was held in the same chapel. At nine o'clock, a much greater number assembled, when GEORGE COOKMAN, Esq., of Hull, took the chair. A general outline was then drawn out, as to the business which was to occupy the attention of the Delegates.

It having been considered, that it was most desirable to communicate with Conference as early as possible, on the nature of the business which had called the Delegates together; it was resolved that an address be drawn up for presentation to Conference, and that, in the mean time, a note, of which the following is a copy, be forwarded to the President of the Conference:—

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST CONFERENCE.

Rev. Sir,—At a numerous meeting of Delegates deputed by various Wesleyan-Methodist Societies, now assembled in Sheffield, July 31, 1835. It has been resolved,

That an address be presented to Conference, stating to them the important business which has occasioned their assembling together. It is therefore requested, that the Conference will appoint at what hour to-morrow it will be most suitable for them to receive the address, and if convenient to communicate the answer to the bearers, Messrs. James Livesey and Charles Parker.

Signed in behalf of the Meeting,

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.
RALPH GRINDROD, Secretary.

Messrs. J. Livesey and C. Parker were deputed to convey the same. After a short time, these gentlemen returned, and reported that they had delivered the note to the care of Mr. Longden, who conveyed it to the President, and on his return informed them that the Conference was then occupied in important business, but that it would be read, and an answer sent down to Surrey-street chapel in the course of the afternoon.

A great number of letters and addresses from various Circuits were read, which produced a most powerful impression on the minds of all present. Those documents exhibited the diffusion of the principles of Methodistical Reform, to an extent which surprised even the most active agents of the Association. Many serious grievances were complained of, arising, as the memorialists believed, from the arbitrary exercise of irresponsible power, on the part of several Preachers, by which hundreds had been unconstitutionally and unscripturally expelled from the Connexion, amongst whom were many experienced and able local preachers, leaders, and stewards; the memorialists also pointed out what they conceived to be the appropriate remedies for the evils of which they complained. A revisal of the laws of membership, both as regarded the mode of admission and expulsion—the establishment of the just authority of the local meetings—and, above all, lay representation in the annual Conferences, were strongly insisted upon in almost every address. The reading of these addresses occupied the whole day.

The following note was received from the President of the Conference:—

Carver-street Chapel, July 31, 1835.

Sir,—The note signed by yourself and Mr. Grindrod has been received. I will lay it before the Conference at the earliest convenient opportunity, and ask their instructions respecting it. At present we are, and probably shall be for some time to come, engaged in business of great importance, which admits of no interruption.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

R. REECE, President.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1.

On Saturday morning, at six o'clock, some resolutions were passed in reference to the order of business, and as to the admittance of members of the Society to the sittings of the Delegates.

Measures were adopted for obtaining chapels and rooms in Sheffield, for the purpose of preaching, holding prayer-meetings, &c., during the sittings of the Delegates; as also suitable spots of ground on which to hold camp-meetings. A note was received from the Rev. Mr. Allin, on behalf of the

ministers and trustees of the chapels in the New Connexion, stating that their chapels and school-rooms were at the service of the Association, either for preaching, or for holding public meetings. Messrs. Hughes, Barlow, and Rawlins, were deputed to make the necessary arrangements.

At nine o'clock some additional letters and memorials were read. A sub-committee was appointed to draw up an address to be presented to the Conference.

Some conversation then ensued as to the propriety of a further communication with Conference, arguing the necessity of an early reply to the application of the preceding day. A sub-committee was appointed for that purpose, and the following note was adopted:—

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONFERENCE.

Surrey-street Chapel, Aug. 1, 1835.

Reverend Sir,—The Wesleyan Delegates from various parts of the kingdom having received a communication from the President of Conference, stating that the note handed in yesterday by Messrs. Livesey and Parker, would be submitted to the Conference as soon as business of great importance then before it was disposed of, beg respectfully to be favoured, during the course of the day, with an answer to their proposal of presenting an address to the Conference.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.
RALPH GRINDROD, Secretary.

Messrs. Livesey and Hesketh were deputed to carry the above note to the Conference.

The nature and extent of the concessions which it would be proper for the Delegates to require from Conference, provided they should be disposed to negotiate on the subject, were then considered. It was resolved that the propositions passed by the Delegates at Manchester—the propositions passed by the Central Committee at Newton—and also a document prepared by a sub-committee of the Delegates of Manchester, submitting a plan of reform,—should be read to the Committee; which was accordingly done.

At three o'clock the meeting formed itself into a committee of the whole house, in order to discuss the propositions to be adopted as the basis of negotiation with the Conference. Mr. BEYNON in the chair.

Mr. M. JOHNSON said that he was extremely anxious to prevent alike any collision between themselves, and between themselves and the Conference. He would, therefore, suggest some propositions, which, while they contained important principles, would render it unnecessary to go into details. Let those propositions be admitted by the Conference, and then, with the New Testament in their hands, the Committee might easily settle all details. Should such propositions be refused by the Conference, it would be seen not only that they acted unkindly, but that they proceeded on the very principles of Popery itself. Mr. Johnson then read the propositions, which will be found in a subsequent page.

Mr. ROWLAND said, that, however Conference might affect to start at such propositions, no doubt could be entertained of their propriety. The Conference would not have it to be supposed that the people had no part in the government of the church, yet they were continually dwelling on inherent ministerial rights, and claimed to govern the church, independently of the church itself. If the Delegates at the outset could get Conference to listen to them on the ground that their propositions were both simple and Scriptural, a great point would be gained; while, on the other hand, if they refused to treat with them on ground so reasonable, in what a strange light would Conference appear to the whole world?

Mr. PARKER thought it quite necessary that the views of the brethren as to lay-delegation in the Conference should be fully settled. Should the Conference meet them, the first question might be, "Do you insist on lay-delegation?" It was well known that was the sorest point in the view of the Conference, and the Committee ought to have some specific instructions upon it.

Mr. CRICKSHANKS wished the discussion to be postponed. If there was any thing like want of unanimity among them, Conference would gladly seize on that as a weak part. Mr. Johnson's propositions might be adopted; and, if Conference returned a favourable answer, instructions might be given to the Committee how to proceed. Should Conference refuse to meet them, they could then act as if there were no such persons in the world. He would not have them go to the Conference to ask concessions. The Bible knew no such word as concession in reference to such points. He was willing to be a slave to the preachers, to wipe the dust from their feet, or to clean their shoes, if the Bible said that he ought to do so. But he dare not make them lords of his conscience; if he did, he should violate the law of Christ. Let them go to the Conference as a united body, and let their principles be clear and open as the noon-day.

The CHAIRMAN expressed his earnest desire that the Delegates would merge their own opinions in those of the Gospel, and aim to cherish those tempers and feelings which were in strict unison with the Christian character.

Mr. MATTHEWS had been a strong advocate for lay-delegation; but he thought that if they could succeed so far as to confirm the authority of the local courts, they would do much. Conference would be covered with shame, if they refused so reasonable a demand.

Mr. PARKER having moved a resolution, the effect of which was the establishment of the just authority of the local meetings,—

Mr. GORDON said that he would willingly second it, being anxious to promote unanimity. He considered lay-delegation as a proper security for the privileges they were about to claim; but yet it was a matter of importance to inquire whether they could consistently ask lay-delegation at the hands of the Conference at present. If Mr. Johnson's propositions were adopted, the Conference would immediately ask, in what form they wished popular interference in the affairs of the church to operate. They ought to settle that question at their present meeting, and not before the Conference. Should they ask the Conference at once for lay-representation, or should they not rather lead them to see that such representation was necessary? They should set their various

grievances before the Conference, as well as the remedies; not so much in the way of detail, as in the form of principles. The grievances and the remedies might all be arranged under three heads. The Conference had made themselves a political, instead of a religious body; they had endeavoured to destroy the independence of the local authorities, which was the grand point ceded by the Regulations of 1797; and they had sinned also against the connexional principle on which the whole system was built; they had adopted new laws and regulations without at all consulting the people to whom those regulations referred. These things they might state to the Conference, and then they might arrange with them as to the precise form in which the principles should work, which they laid down by way of remedy. On those terms the principle of lay-delegation would not be lost sight of:—it would only be postponed as to its details, while they would get the principle firmly established. He regarded lay-delegation not so much as a good in itself, as furnishing a guarantee for the good to be granted—a pledge that government should be administered according to the principles fixed upon. He had no doubt but the compact made with the people in 1797 was intended to recognise the power of the majority to decide on all questions of importance; but there was no distinct guarantee, and hence those laws were variously explained. Let them be careful to advance principles which were strictly Methodistical as well as scriptural, and they would be able to stand firm, and to point out wherein the Conference had transgressed: if they acted otherwise, their wishes would be thwarted. If lay-delegation were indeed a principle of truth, being the truth it must and would prevail: it did not depend on the influence of its advocates and abettors, but upon the influence of truth itself; and that influence would spread, and spread with a force which the preachers could not resist. If they went to Conference and asked at once for lay-delegation, saying, This shall be our first principle, and this shall be our ultimatum; they would be immediately rejected, and treaty would be at an end. But let them get the Conference to establish the three principles, of the religious character of the body, of the independence and authority of the local meetings, and of the Connexional character of the body; and by so doing, they would, in fact, advance the principle of lay-delegation throughout the whole of their vast Connexion, of which they formed a part. First, let them require that the Committee who may be appointed to negotiate with the Conference, aim to establish those principles which he had laid down, and which, till recently, they had supposed Methodism to contain; and next, let them see what guarantee was to be given for the support of those principles.

Mr. JOHNSON, of Liverpool, regarded lay-delegation as perfectly scriptural. In the New Testament it was declared that the whole multitude came together to consult and to decide; it was impossible that could be done by the Methodists who lived in various parts of the kingdom—it could only be done by representatives, as was the case in Parliament. If they had representatives in their local meetings, they would, of course, be duly represented. Mr. Gordon had said, that, if the principles he had laid down were established, the seed would be sown; but their fathers in 1797 sowed the seed of lay-delegation, and where was the tree of liberty? where did it rise? over whom did it spread its branches? As to the principle of lay-delegation, they were all agreed. All their constituents had said, We consider lay-delegation necessary. And if the people demanded it—if it was scriptural—if it accorded with the British constitution—why should they not ask and obtain it?

Mr. M. JOHNSON explained. He thought the principle of lay-delegation might be maintained in perfect consistency with the maintenance of the authority of the local courts.

Here it was announced that a messenger had arrived from Conference. The following communication was read to the meeting:

Carver-street Chapel, Aug. 3, 1835.

Sir,—In reply to your note dated this day, I am directed to inform you that, according to our usual custom, any communication intended for the Conference may be sent to the President, either by post, or by a special messenger: and he will take the most suitable opportunity for obtaining the instructions of his Brethren on the subject.

I am, Sir, your's respectfully,

Mr. G. Cookman.

R. REECE.

This note appeared to give much satisfaction, and it was immediately proposed that the Address which the sub-committee had drawn up should be read. It was as follows:—

AN ADDRESS TO THE METHODIST CONFERENCE ASSEMBLED IN SHEFFIELD, FROM A NUMEROUS MEETING OF WESLEYAN DELEGATES.

Dear Brethren,—The serious and alarming disturbance which at present prevails throughout a considerable part of the Wesleyan Connexion, forms a reason sufficient to justify the unusual application which we thus make to you.

We deplore the evils of disunion and division which have already accompanied that disturbance, and anticipate with the most painful feelings still greater evils as likely to occur, unless efficient measures be immediately adopted to arrest the progress of disorganisation.

We feel ourselves united to the system of Methodism by the strong tie of grateful affection. Many of us have been connected with it from our earliest years. Ye are our witnesses, that we have cheerfully, according to our ability, in our several spheres, endeavoured to diffuse its influence and promote its objects; and, in so doing, have incurred heavy pecuniary responsibilities. In its communion we still wish to labour, to live and to die; and our heart's desire and prayer to God is, that Methodism, strictly conformed to the principles contained in his holy word, may bless our children and children's children to the end of time.

We might on these and on other grounds assert a personal claim to the attention we solicit; but, when we inform you that we have been commissioned to hold communication with you by a vast number, comprising tens of thousands of members of the societies over which you have been placed, we feel assured that you will give the most serious regard to our requests.

Brethren, it is union for which we are contending, and not division, union on a solid and Scriptural foundation; and we confidently hope that you will co-operate with us in stilling the agitation which is so injurious to the character, and destructive to the success, of our community. In the fear of the Lord, we submit to you our wishes. It is with you to pour oil on the troubled waters. You have the power to pro-

long and increase the discord and strife now so unhappily prevailing among us ; and you have also the power, under God, to render our Connexion prosperous and happy.

Permit us to state—and the statement is made not in anger but in sorrow—that, in our opinion, the cause of the grievances of which complaint is at present so loudly and generally made, is the assumption on your part of an authority, which, both as to its nature and extent, is inconsistent with the brotherly relation which ought to subsist among us. It is on this account that we so anxiously look to you for the removal of those grievances. We request you to allow us personally to communicate with you on this subject, either by admitting us into your Conference, or by appointing some of your number who may meet with us, or in any other equitable mode which may be more convenient to you.

We are prepared respectfully and affectionately to receive any suggestions toward the establishment of peace which you may deem proper to make to us in the course of such communication, as we are also ready clearly and fully to state what we believe will most conduce to the welfare of Methodism at the present crisis.

Messrs. Livesey, Hesketh, and Parker, were deputed to present the Address immediately to the President of the Conference.

Mr. GORDON resumed the subject of lay-delegation. He suggested that the Committee might at once demand lay-delegation ; but that, if they found that there were insuperable difficulties in the way of obtaining it, they might then have liberty to concede to a postponement of the subject.

Mr. REDSTONE was convinced that the persons whom the majority of the Delegates represented would not be satisfied with any thing short of lay-delegation. He considered it as the salvation of the Connexion ; and trusted that all present would be faithful to their constituents.

Mr. HUGHES said, that, though the President of the Conference had sent them a polite answer, he had no very sanguine hope as to the result. He expected they would have to open the campaign again ; even before they left Sheffield. They ought to be prepared to do so. Amongst other things he had brought with him two plans for Tabernacles ; a species of building which at Manchester had been of great service to them. They had got the plans lithographed, so that the Delegates might have copies of them. He repeated that he saw but little hope of adjustment with the Conference ; and, while those great agitators were agitating, what was to be done with the people ? Tabernacles must be provided for them. They had produced a wonderful effect wherever they had been introduced. Private members, and official characters, and even preachers, had been seen peeping at them ; and some high dominants had visited them, and had associated with the people, and seemed quite delighted. At Carlisle, a Tabernacle had been erected, and the result had been great and glorious. Sinners of the deepest dye had attended, and many conversions had taken place. The word of life and salvation had been preached, and it had become life and salvation to many who had heard it. If the people were driven out of their chapels, where were they to go ? They might not find gay and gorgeous chapels, but they might have comfortable Tabernacles : they might not have pealing organs, but they could have pealing voices : they might not have a Liturgy, but in places where persons could pray for themselves, what need had they of a Liturgy ? At Manchester they had got quite into the old Methodist fashion ; and what the Tabernacle had done for them there, it might do elsewhere for others.

Mr. J. WOOD could not but advert again to the communication from the President of the Conference. He suspected that it was designed to steal a march upon them. It was merely formal ; such an answer as might have been given to members of the New Connexion, or of any other body. He proposed, therefore, that a sub-committee should proceed to draw up its plan of operations for the future, in the event of Conference refusing to treat.

Mr. ROWLAND and Mr. REDSTONE concurred, and a sub-committee was formed for that purpose.

The deputation which had waited on the President of the Conference with the Address of the Delegates having returned, the Chairman resumed his seat, and it was stated to the meeting, that the President had received the Address, and had promised to lay it before the Conference at the earliest period.

It having been announced to the meeting that Dr. Warren had been expelled by the Conference, a deputation was appointed to wait upon him, and to request his company in the meeting, as also to take tea with the Delegates that evening. The Doctor shortly after arrived, and was most warmly greeted. At the conclusion of the meeting, he accompanied the Delegates to the Albion Hotel, where he took tea, and spent a portion of the evening with them.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2.

On Sunday morning, at seven o'clock, the Delegates and friends met together at Surrey-street Chapel, when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to them by Dr. Warren. He delivered some very solemn and affecting addresses, in the course of which he touched delicately on the existing state of things in the Society, and earnestly exhorted all present to the exercise of Christian patience and forbearance. There was preaching in various places during the day, by the Delegates according to previous announcement ; and a camp meeting was held in the afternoon at the bottom of Arundel-street, at which several hundreds attended, and listened to the various addresses, &c., with deep attention.

MONDAY, AUGUST 3.

On Monday morning, at six o'clock, the Delegates again sat in Committee.

Mr. M. JOHNSON, having made some general remarks on the great importance of unanimity, read a paper as to the terms on which the Delegates might meet the Conference, and submitted a series of resolutions. That what those resolutions included, would be granted by the Conference, was about as likely as that they would grant lay-delegation ; but the moderation and simplicity of the things which they required, would be apparent to the people, and would throw the onus on the Conference if they were rejected. The resolutions were an appeal to common sense, to reason, and to Scripture ; and the refusal to grant them, would give the Association a hold upon the people which it never had before.

Mr. BLYTHMAN had been a Wesleyan Methodist for upwards of twenty years, and had been forced

away from the Connexion, in consequence of the occurrences of 1827. No charge of immorality had been preferred against him. The meeting, he said, appeared to be agreed, that lay-delegation was necessary; and he was fully prepared to prove, that it was in perfect accordance with the practice of the primitive church. Mr. Blythman was proceeding to argue the point from Scripture, when he was called to order by several gentlemen, on the ground that the right of the people to lay-representation had not been denied. He concluded, therefore, by contending, that, if they agreed that lay-delegation was scriptural, they ought not, by any instructions to their Committee, make provision for abandoning it.

Mr. J. WOOD wished to ask, if the opening of the District and Conference Meetings was provided for by any of the propositions:—that had been considered a matter of importance. Again; the principle which had been laid down at Manchester, was the right of interference on the part of *all the members* of the church; whereas, the proposition appeared only to include the *officers*. At present, there was no representation of the people:—certainly they were not represented by the Leaders. He wished also to know, whether the present Rules of the Society were to be allowed to stand, or whether a revival of them should be proposed, taking from the Conference the power to alter them, except after the mode specified in the proposition.

Mr. M. JOHNSON thought that had been fully provided for in the words “any other regulation which may be deemed necessary.”

The *first* resolution was then carried unanimously; viz.—

“The Address of the Delegates having, at the intimation of the Conference, been presented to the President, the meeting now deem it necessary to settle, and finally determine the grounds upon which they are disposed to treat with Conference, in order to an amicable and equitable adjustment of the unhappy differences which at present exist in the Connexion. As the meeting of Delegates at Manchester claimed this right of interference of the members of the church in the management of all its affairs, and as it appears to this meeting, that such claim is sanctioned by the New Testament, and agreeable to the practice of the Primitive Church, and calculated also to secure and perpetuate the religious rights and privileges of the people; it is resolved—

“1st. That in any negotiation which the Delegates may enter into with the Conference, the indisputable right of the members of the church to take part with the preachers in Conference, in making laws for the government of the Connexion shall be distinctly and unequivocally avowed, and demanded as the basis of further arrangements.”

Resolution the *second* was then read, as follows:—

“2d. That if it should appear to the deputation, which may be appointed to treat with the Conference, that there exists at present any insuperable difficulty to the admission of lay-representatives into the Conference, then the following outline of a plan for the future government of the Societies, with such additions in perfect accordance with its principles as may be mutually agreed upon between the two deputations, shall be submitted to the Conference for its consideration and adoption.”

Many of the Delegates objected to this resolution, on the ground that it went to destroy the force of the principle which had been laid down in the first proposition. The majority of them said that their constituents had instructed them to insist on lay-delegation as a *sine qua non*.

Mr. GREENHALGH suggested that if while they insisted upon their right to it, they could by a postponement as to the precise time of obtaining it, secure the co-operation of all their friends, they would ultimately be able to carry their views most triumphantly.

Mr. WALLACE was sorry to see that there was so much fear of giving offence to the preachers. Conference seemed to be every thing, and the Society nothing. The object of the Delegates was to prevent the Connexion from being torn asunder. He believed that the great majority of their constituents regarded lay-delegation as that without which they would have no security for aught beside. But while, as Britons and as Christians, they were determined to maintain their rights, if it was thought that the postponement of the subject would promote the general good, he should be sorry to place difficulties in the way.

Mr. HUGHES had never dreamed that Conference would grant lay-delegation. Their constituents had instructed them to *ask* for lay-delegation; but they had not instructed them to *get* it. He wished to obtain it, but at the best time. Even should Conference grant it, some of the people were not prepared to receive it; some would even oppose it. Though the members of the Association and their friends were numerous, they were far from being the majority; and the majority might say, “Though the Conference is ready to grant you lay-delegation, we will not allow you to have it.” He thought that the course which it was now proposed for the Delegates to adopt, would give them a decided vantage ground, and that in the end their wishes would be accomplished.

Mr. LOWTHIAN, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. DENT, and some other gentlemen, expressed themselves briefly in favour of the resolution.

Mr. LIVESEY had been entertained and gratified by the unanimity which had hitherto prevailed, and he hoped that they would now come to a unanimous conclusion. Should there be any disunion, it would be trumpeted by their enemies from one end of the kingdom to the other, and their cause would be deeply injured.

Mr. WILKS said, that his Birmingham friends had commissioned him to insist on lay-delegation. He was afraid that the concessions they were disposed to make to the Conference would endanger their liberties. They might wait for lay-delegation long enough, if they waited till the preachers were disposed to grant it. It had been said, that but a small portion of the people desired it; if so, why did Mr. Rowland lay such stress on the “*vast mass*” of evidence furnished by the letters and addresses? Why should they be content with half-measures, or with a partial reform? If they were to act so, the great end of their meeting would be altogether vain. If there was a want of unanimity, then let the wishes of the majority be regarded. At Birmingham, out of 94 who were present, only nine voted against it.

Mr. FARRER replied, that, as they had already unanimously passed a resolution expressive of their

views of the necessity of lay-delegation, it was not correct to say that there was any difference of opinion among them.

At nine o'clock the discussion was resumed.

Mr. JOHNSON, of Preston, said, that he was deputed to insist upon lay-delegation in Conference, but that he should not be worthy of the office he sustained, if he was to insist upon it at an unseasonable or improper time. Having for years advocated the principles of universal civil liberty, he was equally prepared to do so as to religious liberty. No consideration should induce him to blink his opinions: he would not yield one iota of his principles for the King himself—for the President—nor for the Conference; still he should be glad to treat with them. It should be recollected that the Conference was one party and that they were another; and, if they were to go at once to Conference and say, We will have lay-delegation whether you choose or not, they might just as well take their departure home. He would have the deputation firm, and yet willing to conciliate. If they did not succeed this year, yet in 1836 they would obtain what they wanted, not as a concession, but in answer to positive demands which could not be resisted.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS said it was evident that the preachers had sinned against the Connexion, and had in many cases broken faith with the people: and it was also evident that they had sinned against the word of God, for they had not founded their legislation upon Scripture. It was true that they might not be aware they were placed in such a situation: they were like men who had to work a crane by means of a wheel; when they were placed within the wheel, they could not but go on and on; and, in proportion to the impetus given to the machine, was the rapidity of their movements. The moment they acted differently—like Dr. Warren, for instance,—they lost their Conferential character. Let, however, the Delegates but persevere in a right course, and it would be said of them as it was of the men of 1797, "There were giants in those days,"—men that dared to risk their ease and their property, and to persevere to the accomplishment of their object. He did not like to hear about *concessions* being made; they wanted no concessions. If the preachers were right, it was sinful to induce them to give any thing up; but, if they were wrong, he demanded them to act properly. They had stolen the rights of the people, and the people wanted their stolen rights back again. He was willing to do any thing for the preachers, if it could be proved from Scripture that he ought to do it. He would clean their shoes, or lick the dust from their feet, or submit to crucifixion for them, if the Scripture required it. The Delegates wanted no concessions. Those who granted concessions might at any time take them back again; but the preachers had grasped power to which they had no claim, and the people were asking simply for their rights. Mr. Gordon had said that the concessions of 1797 were lost for want of due guarantees; and yet, at the same time, he had said that he would be willing to take less, on the principle that he would still continue to agitate till he gained the rest. But was agitation so pleasant? He would not have left his wife and children for a single day merely for that purpose. What he wanted was peace; to have all things set at rest: he wished to get done with agitation, that they might go forward as plain, simple-hearted, Christian Methodists. Let them, as their address to the Conference beautifully said, aim to pour oil upon the troubled waters. He trusted they would not think of going to the Conference with two faces, but honestly and boldly ask what they wanted at once. They should guard against being befooled. Methodists naturally loved their preachers, and he could not but admire the fine burst of feeling which seemed to come from their hearts when the note was received from the President. But, while he loved the preachers, he was not willing that they should gain advantage over him contrary to the principles of the Bible. The Bible had been thrown out from the Conference, and they should make it their business to take it back, that the Conference might make it the rule by which to frame all their laws. If a law were proposed, and any member believed it to be unscriptural, he might tell his leader, and his leader might take it to the Leaders' Meeting, and the Leaders' Meeting might take it to the Quarterly Meeting, and so it might go back to the Conference. If God and his word had thus been allowed to be the judge, they could not, as a Connexion, have been reduced to the monstrous state in which they now were. As to the principle of lay-delegation, he did not think it necessary to discuss that: they had already passed a resolution to demand it; let that demand be presented by the deputation, and if Conference refused to grant it, let them come back to the meeting and take their opinion.

Mr. ROWLAND pressed the importance of coming to a vote. He believed that there was no real difference between them. They had asserted their Scriptural right to lay-delegation; and with that in their hands, the deputation ought to have discretionary powers. What that deputation did was not binding on the meeting till the meeting confirmed it.

Mr. HAY, of Carrickfergus, said, he was in the minority at Manchester, on the question of lay-delegation. He was by no means against the principle, but he thought that to press it too strongly, would be to retard their own work. In the important part of Ireland from which he came, they wished for lay-delegation; but, as the Irish Conference went along just as the English Conference did, he was convinced that if they were too urgent in demanding it, agitation would at once be at an end, and the great work of Reform would be thrown back half a century.

Mr. C. PARKER said, the plain question was, whether or not they were to accept of any thing short of lay-delegation. Mr. Cruickshanks had said, that he would have nothing but what was Scriptural, and that he deprecated agitation. But if the Conference would not grant lay-delegation, and they were not to agitate, what must they do? They must leave the Connexion. He, for one, was not prepared so to do, if he could not *now* get lay-delegation. He considered that their case differed much from that of their Protestant brethren; those brethren were already in safe port, but the persons whom the Delegates represented, were still at sea. If they could not *at present* get all they asked, let them get as much as they could. He apprehended they were not met there to begin *de novo*, to form a new system; if they were, they must take the Scriptures *alone* for their guide; and, if they did so, the first question would be, whether there should be an annual Conference?

then, secondly, what should be the power and the work of that Conference? and, thirdly, of whom should it be composed? Then, the question of lay-delegation would come properly before them. But he contended, not only that they were not met to form a system, but that they had no moral right to enforce lay delegation upon the Conference, and upon that portion of the Societies who were opposed to it. Suppose he conceded that there ought to be an annual Conference, and that there ought to be lay-delegates there, still, as a Methodist, he had no right to insist upon it, because lay-delegates never were in the Conference. The Conference had not, in that respect, deprived him of any right; he could not ask for lay-delegation as the restoration of a privilege, because, when he entered the Society, there was no such thing in existence. In changing a constitution, it was always necessary to have the general consent of all parties. When the Association first set out, it was not for the purpose of obtaining lay-delegation:—its avowed object was the redress of grievances. The first grievance which led to it was that the Theological Institution was forced upon the people without duly consulting them. Another grievance was, that free discussion was prevented: they had, till recently, no idea that a Superintendent had power to refuse such discussion, or to prevent the people from approaching the Conference. The next point was the expulsion of officers and members from the Society, at the will and pleasure of the Superintendent, not only without consulting the people, but against the solemn protest of the majority, which majority was required by the Regulations made at Leeds. Mr. Parker next proceeded to notice the undue power exercised by the preachers in the Leeds case, the application of tests to official characters, &c. He then remarked that the Association set out with the declaration that they wanted nothing new in Methodism—nothing contrary to its existing regulations and rules. But suppose they had lay-delegation, how would it work? Suppose there were an equal number of preachers and laymen in the Conference: the preachers would all be found arrayed on one side; witness the 840 who signed the renowned declaration. With such a preponderance the preachers would always secure a majority.

Mr. PARKER here paused, and intimated that he had not intended occupying so much of the time of the Meeting, and would not proceed unless the Meeting wished it. (Cries of "Go on.")

Mr. ROWLAND submitted that the arguments used by Mr. Parker were directed against the *principle* of lay-delegation. Mr. Parker denied this, and said that the arguments went to show that they might and ought to perform the question of lay-delegation, and that he considered the speech of Mr. Johnson, of Preston, unanswerable.

Mr. SIGSTON said, that, supposing the preachers should say they would not grant lay-delegation, the Committee had power to abandon it for the present. Did that mean that they were to abandon the object of the Association, or that they were not to be in the field, and cease to agitate? If they were not to have lay-delegation till the preachers were convinced in their judgments they ought to have it, they would have some time to wait. He feared that the Conference was trifling with them—that the old satanic plan of 1797 was being played over again. If, however, they were to be allowed still to press their measures, he had no objection to a temporary postponement. It had been said that the Protestant Methodists had got safely into port; but they were out at sea for a long season; they looked to the east, west, north, and south, in vain. There was then no *Christian Advocate* in existence, and their friends had not the means of knowing their case. The Lord of the seas had protected them, and they were now within hail of their friends, and ready to come to their help. They had had more experience of the Conference men than many present, and would caution their friends against being deceived.

Mr. ROWLAND did not think that the Conference could grant them lay-delegation at present, if they were so disposed.

Mr. PARKER was quite satisfied that the preachers would not grant it. But if they could have the just authority of the local courts established, that might afford them an opportunity of urging the question from time to time, till the minds of the preachers were liberalized. It had been said that lay-delegation was scriptural. It was also said that without lay-delegation there could be no just security for the due administration of laws, or for the due liberties of the people. But he conceived that a clear and distinct code of laws would grant that security. The laws of 1797 as they appeared in the Minutes were not clear. If they had said plainly that no leader or member should be expelled without the decision of a *majority* of the meeting, there could have been no mistake; but when it said that the guilt of the individual should be proved at a Leaders' Meeting, it became ambiguous, and oppression followed. A distinct code of laws would be a security against that. There were several things, Mr. Parker said, which might be regarded in the light of securities: there was the increased information of the Body, and the improving spirit of the age: then, a large portion of the press, including the *Christian Advocate*, was constantly enlarging on and advocating the principles of religious liberty. In addition to these, they must endeavour to get an open Conference: he shuddered at the idea of a number of religious men meeting together within closed doors to regulate the affairs of the Church. With the exception of committees, the doors ought to be thrown open to the members of the Society. Then, no law ought to be passed and entered on the journals of the Conference without being made known to the people, and submitted for their approval. But the chief guarantee would be that the executive power must pass to the local meetings. How was it at present according to the new interpretation of the law—suppose he were to write a letter for publication in the *Christian Advocate*, the Superintendent states the charge at the Leaders' Meeting—evidence is produced as to the *mere fact*—the question is asked, "you who are of opinion that John Parker wrote that letter hold up your hands!" then follows the awful sentence of expulsion. A man has no right to be deprived of membership merely by a rule of Conference: he ought to be deprived of it, if at all, by an act of the church. He denied the right of any Conference, however constituted, to make laws to govern him, so far as Christian membership was concerned. How did Mr. Wesley conclude the Rules of Society? These rules we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice.

Mr. COOKMAN asked if the meeting did not think that they should have a more effectual check to the evils they complained of, by means of local courts, than they could possibly have by lay-delegation in the Conference. In the Quarterly Meetings, they had from thirty to seventy leaders to two or three preachers, while in the Conference they would have only 100 Delegates to 300 or 400 preachers. In the one case they had about 100 to guard their interests, in the other not fewer than 30,000.

Mr. FARRER, of Liverpool, contended that even if Conference were disposed to grant lay-delegation, the Connexion was not in a condition to receive it. There was scarcely one third of the people in favour of it. Most, however, agreed that the members had a right to take part in the administration of the affairs of the church. The reason why they had been prevented from enjoying their just rights, was because the regulations of 1797 had been misrepresented and misconstrued. The men who lived at that time could testify, and the rules which were published in 1798, and 1800, showed that the construction which was put upon those regulations, was very different from that put upon them by preachers in the present day. Believing that to be the construction of those laws, they (he and his friends at Liverpool) had taken certain steps. But when they wished some important subjects to be discussed at the leaders' meetings, Mr. Jackson refused permission, and they were expelled. Hence the Association was formed. When all law was thus set at defiance, they had, in some sense, to begin *de novo*. There were three or four things which they particularly wanted, and they gave Conference an opportunity of putting them into the way of obtaining them in the most legal manner. First, they claimed the right of membership, that they might not be expelled but by a majority. Secondly, the nomination of the leaders by the people. Thirdly, free discussion in their meetings, and a vote upon the laws proposed. Were fair discussion allowed, the table of the Conference would soon be filled with petitions against laws which were arbitrary and unscriptural. While he thought that they would not rightly discharge their duty, if they insisted too strongly on lay-delegation, he maintained, that they ought not to rest till they obtained all that was necessary to the enjoyment of their just privileges. One powerful reason why they should confine themselves to the things he had mentioned was, that, if Conference should refuse them what they asked,—which were the common rights of every Protestant Church,—what would be the light in which Conference would be regarded by the nation? They would stand before the whole world as Papists. Conference, in fact, was a hundred-headed Pope, arbitrary and cruel. In conclusion, Mr. Farrer recommended great plainness of statement, so that the Conference would be unable to amplify any thing against them. By that means, too, they might conciliate what he would call their Tory friends. When they asked only for plain, Scriptural, and well-defined rights, and had them refused, those persons would soon see that the preachers wished for power, not as the means of benefitting the people, but for its own sake.

Mr. MILLER and Mr. GROSCOTT followed on the same side.

Mr. HUGHES said it had been asked, shall the Association continue in its present position? He said no: because they could not have free discussion, they had been obliged to go on the house-tops and into the highways. But if they were allowed to go to Conference and make arrangements with them, they should then form themselves into an association in every society in the Connexion. They would then have a guarantee for their privileges in every society. If the rights of membership were restored, and the king of terrors no longer reigned; if no arbitrary despot could say, "Sit down, Sir; or, if you don't, I'll make you!" at the same time giving out that very favourite hymn, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," then the change in their posture would be that they would be inside the church instead of out of it. And what Methodist would not prefer that? It was said, "Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just;" and the Association must be armed. But if their reverences should open their ears to their complaints; if they should say, you shall be heard in your local meetings—you shall not be removed from the society, but on a sentence after clear proof of your guilt before a majority of your brethren; and why do you continue to agitate?—then they would disarm themselves. They must be convinced that they had good grounds for agitating; it was a very serious thing to divide and to disunite. Should the concessions they asked be granted, they would have more privileges than any other Christian society. The meeting would do well to consider the value of conciliation; and when those who were now, in some sense, opposed to them, saw that they asked what was just and Scriptural, they would come forward to their help, and their point would be gained.

Mr. JOHNSON ardently desired what he believed to be Scriptural, but he would not seek to obtain it in a way which would hinder his own success. He would have the Delegates place themselves in a position in which the Conference could not long resist them. In one sense, he cared not how little they asked for; it would probably be refused; and he should, so far, be satisfied; the refusal of what was so just and reasonable, would open the eyes of the Society and the world, and so Conference would be made to stink in the nostrils of all.

Mr. BARNARD, from Sittingbourne, was an advocate for lay-delegation. He read a letter from Mr. Brightman, of Sheerness, urging lay-delegation, and informing the meeting, that the work of agitation was going on at Woolwich.

Mr. WILKS, of Birmingham; Mr. BROWN, of Louth; Mr. GORDON, and Mr. FARRER, briefly addressed the meeting.

Mr. SISSISON wished for lay-delegation most fully; but he saw, that, if he was to seek it in the way some proposed, he should never get it at all. The power of the Conference rested on the ignorance of the people. If the Conference refused to establish the just authority of the local meetings, that would open the eyes of the people. The Delegates might expect soon to have the whole Connexion with them.

Mr. COCHRANE, from Glasgow, said, that the friends in Scotland were well aware of the value of lay-delegation, and they had instructed him to ask for it, but not in such a way as to injure the whole cause. In Scotland, the majority had always the power of deciding; but then the mischief was, that the preachers endeavoured to influence that majority, by gaining the ear of all the leading

men preparatory to a vote. He would have all the meetings of the Societies, as well as Conference itself, open to all the members.

Mr. REDSTONE, of Winchester, said, that the people of that city were an afflicted, maltreated people. They had stood up nobly, as became Christian men, and had sent the Conference preacher adrift. Unless their rights were fully established, they were determined not to be re-united to the Old Connexion. The Old Connexion, however, was not an appropriate title; the modern Methodists were no more the Old Connexion, than Popery was the original church. He would designate them the Conference Party.

Several other Delegates expressed their opinions briefly on the subject, till the cries of "Question" became very general.

The question was then put, when there appeared:—for the resolution, 81; against it, 5.

The *Gloria Patri* was then sung, as an expression of gratitude for the unanimity which had prevailed.

A sub-committee was then appointed to draw up the plan for the future government of the Societies referred to in the resolution just carried.

The third general resolution was then read, as follows:—

"That, in the event of the Conference adopting the propositions submitted by this meeting, as the foundation of a friendly adjustment, the Delegates will require, as a *sine qua non*, previous to the completion of the proposed arrangement between the Conference and the people, that the Rev. Dr. Warren, and any other preacher who may have incurred the displeasure of the Conference or any District Meeting, on matters connected with the present disturbance in the Connexion, shall be restored to his work in the ministry; and that every official person or private member who has been expelled since the Conference of 1827, for any act arising out of the various causes of dissatisfaction prevailing in the Societies, or who, from the same cause, may have withdrawn from the Societies, shall, unless proved guilty, by a majority of the Leaders' Meeting, of some subsequent act of immorality, be reinstated in the situation he held previous to his expulsion or withdrawal."

Mr. FARRER approved of the general tenor of the resolution, but objected to the expression "*sine qua non*." He himself was an expelled member; and might, therefore, be expected to feel on the subject, but he stood rather for principles than because of individual circumstances.

Mr. M. JOHNSON was aware that Dr. Warren had made a voluntary offer to immolate himself, so the great cause might be advanced. But, however willing the Doctor might be to do so, that people would prove themselves utterly unworthy of him who would require him to make such a sacrifice.

Mr. HESKETH said that he stood in connexion with Dr. Warren. When that gentleman was so unrighteously, unscripturally, unmethodistically expelled from his pulpits, he (Mr. H.) had felt very strongly. He could not but take part, in a certain sense, with fifteen hundred or two thousand of his brethren and sisters. No charge had been preferred against him, nor had he ever been expelled. The Superintendent had contented himself with merely leaving his name out of the plan. As a Methodist, he was nearly the oldest in that society. He had been a member for forty-five years, a leader, and having connexion with several chapels and schools. Notwithstanding all this, he felt willing to sacrifice any thing for the peace of the great body, to put an end to the agitation which had so extensively prevailed. He was almost afraid that if the meeting passed the resolution then proposed, they would place difficulties in their own way. At least, he suggested that the resolution should be softened down.

Mr. HUGHES said that he could not return to the society, if Dr. Warren was not restored. If the Conference wished them to forgive it, it must also forgive them. They had a right to claim that Dr. Warren, and others who had been unrighteously expelled, should be restored. He could not but admire the magnanimity and modesty of the man who had expressed his readiness to become the victim; but should they allow him to do so. (Loud cries of "No, no," from all parts of the meeting.)

Mr. GREENHALGH supported the resolution, and said that a similar resolution had been most enthusiastically carried at Manchester.

Mr. COCHRANE said he had heard, on good authority, that, on reference being made in Conference to the Association, Dr. Warren had declared his determination to stand or fall by it. This statement was confirmed.

Mr. HESKETH explained. He would be one of the last to sacrifice Dr. Warren. Means had been suggested, by which Dr. Warren would be placed in more comfortable circumstances than he could have been placed in had he remained a member of the Conference. Still, as to himself, he was willing to make any sacrifice by which the peace of 800,000 members of a Christian Society might be secured.

Mr. TAYLOR supported the resolution, and bore a high testimony to the disinterestedness and Christian feeling which Dr. Warren had manifested.

Mr. EDWARDS, of Frodsham, said that he should never be able to face his constituents in Northwich, if the resolution were not carried.

Mr. SHEDDON thought that Dr. Warren stood in a very different position from the officers and members who had been expelled. If they gained from the Conference what they were now asking, those members would be restored as a matter of course. To ask the Conference to restore them, was to acknowledge that they had the very power to which it was generally declared they had no right.

Mr. M. JOHNSON was of the same opinion; still he would ask Conference to do it, as it was by their act the members were expelled. He would make them undo their own work.

Mr. REDSTONE, Mr. WILKS, and several other gentlemen, supported the resolution.

Mr. MATTHEWS was convinced that nothing but a vote of the Conference could restore many of the expelled members. He lamented to think that those who expelled them were likely to vote for their continued expulsion. If the Conference could thus show an unforgiving, unrelenting

disposition, who could join them with pleasure? He almost shuddered to kneel down with some of them, while he heard them solemnly condemn themselves as they prayed, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

Mr. J. WOOD said that nothing could have induced him to risk his membership, but the vast importance of the cause in which he was embarked. He regarded Christian membership as the richest earthly privilege. But he thought that the question was rather as to time than as to principle. If they could but succeed to establish the authority of the local meetings, sympathy and gratitude to those who had gained so much for them would induce the members of Society to vote for their return.

Mr. WALLACE had been expelled, but not by a leaders' meeting. Not a leader was allowed to speak. The worthy Superintendent said, "By virtue of the power vested in me by the Conference, and by virtue of my office, I declare you expelled." And the legal agent of the Conference party had been instructed in the Court of Chancery, to claim for the Conference irresponsible, absolute, and unlimited power!

Mr. SHEDDON: By what authority could the Conference give Mr. Sugden power to expel Mr. Wallace? They have no law for it!

Mr. COOKMAN: They are "a law unto themselves."

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS and Mr. WILKS supported the resolution.

Mr. CAIN said that hitherto the society in the Isle of Man had been comparatively in peace. They had read the *Christian Advocate*; but agitation had not commenced, till they found how Dr. Warren had been treated. They immediately determined to stand or fall by him. For himself, he had been expelled against the voice of a large majority, by the exclusive authority of the Superintendent.

Mr. J. STEPHENS read an extract from the Deed Poll, with the object of showing, that the restoration of Dr. Warren to his place in the Conference, was an utter impossibility. "The Conference shall and may expel, and put out from being a member thereof, or from being in connexion therewith, or from being upon trial, for any cause which to the Conference may seem fit or necessary: and every member of the Conference so expelled, and put out, shall cease to be a member thereof to all intents and purposes, as though he was naturally dead. And the Conference, immediately after the expulsion of any member thereof, as aforesaid, shall elect another person to be a member of the Conference, in the stead of such member so expelled." And to show the spirit in which Dr. Warren was expelled by the Conference, Mr. Stephens added further that, when the resolution for his expulsion was put, the preachers all stood up.

Mr. SISSON intimated that the concluding part of the clause gave the Conference the power to reinstate him.

Mr. STEPHENS replied that the Deed Poll provided that *another* person should be elected in the stead of the member so expelled. Though the Conference might again receive Dr. Warren as a preacher, he could not be restored to his place among the legal hundred.

Mr. FARRER said, that the subject had assumed an importance which he had not anticipated. It seemed as if the cessation of agitation, the return of members to the Connexion, and other matters equally important, were all made to rest on the resolution now before the meeting. When he looked to the principles of the Association, he found that Dr. Warren was not named. He himself would not have joined the Association for any such purpose. The Association was formed for the general good; the case of Dr. Warren furnished an opportunity, merely, for its operation. He did not join the Association for the purpose of forming a new Connexion, and were he to suppose that to be its object, he should at once leave it. He had not the most remote idea of forsaking Dr. Warren: the Doctor had been treated with great injustice and severity, and that was quite sufficient to excite deep sympathy and support. But he deprecated the idea of forming a new communion: if there was any such intention, he, for one, should leave the Association.

At three o'clock the propositions to be submitted to the Conference were read, and it was resolved,

"1. That no official person be censured, suspended, or expelled from office, without the consent of a majority of the meeting of which he is a member; and that no member shall be expelled the Society without the consent of a majority of the Leaders' Meeting. An appeal to lie from the Local Preachers' and the Leaders' Meetings to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the decision of this Meeting to be final.

"2. That all official meetings have the unfettered right of addressing Conference on any subject which they think affects the Society, Circuit, or Connexion. That no Superintendent, as Chairman *ex officio*, shall be allowed to prohibit any official meeting from passing resolutions expressive of its sentiments, for the purpose of conveying such sentiments to the Conference; and that, if any Superintendent should refuse to put to the vote any resolutions regularly proposed for the before-mentioned purpose, then the meeting shall have authority to appoint another person to be for that time the chairman of the meeting."

The third proposition was then read, as follows:—

"3. That the nomination to all offices in local meetings be vested in the preachers and officers of such meetings conjointly.

Mr. BARNES observed, that the preachers, by exercising the right of nomination, had in many cases selected those persons who were most likely to meet their views.

Mr. GREENHALGH confirmed this statement, and had known many instances in which wrong had been inflicted by that means.

Mr. HUGHES said, that they ought not to expose their preachers to temptation,—especially to those which were peculiarly adapted to the lust of power. He was not aware that the preachers possessed any such right, and, in many cases, they were not qualified to select the most suitable individuals. Who was so proper to judge of the qualifications of individuals as the persons composing the local meetings? How could an Itinerant preacher, just come among them, select

persons of wisdom and experience? Hence, a stripling rode over the heads of the most aged and suitable individuals, and expelled from the Society men of long standing, of great wisdom, piety, and usefulness.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS maintained that the preachers had as Scriptural a right to the privileges of church-membership, as private Christians had. They had no greater right to them than private members, but to deprive them of those privileges, would be to disgrace them; and that, he was convinced, was not the wish of any individual.

Mr. WALLACE was convinced, that the influence of the preachers, in reference to nominations to office, was often exercised in an arbitrary and pernicious manner. The circumstance of their presiding, and having the casting vote, gave them quite influence enough, without the power of nomination.

Mr. GORDON said, it was but fair and right that the preacher should have the privilege proposed; and, even if he were deprived of it, he could still employ his influence to obtain votes according to his wishes.

The proposition was then carried unanimously; as were also the 4th, 5th, and 6th, as follows:—

"4. That, before the Conference pass any new rule or regulation affecting the trustees, the opinion of the people through the Quarterly Meetings in the preceding year, shall be taken thereon; and, unless a majority of the members, as represented by such meetings, agree to such proposed rule or regulation, it shall not become the law of the Connexion."

"5. That the financial affairs of the Connexion be managed as much as possible by laymen, and that the laymen upon our various committees be chosen by the people."

"6. That the Conference and all other Methodist meetings shall confine their business to subjects which are strictly and distinctively religious."

A deputation who had been appointed for that purpose arrived at the meeting in company with Dr. WARREN, whom they had escorted from the doors of Carver-street chapel, after his expulsion had been pronounced in due form by the President. It was also proposed that the Delegates should escort him to his lodging at the conclusion of the sitting.

Dr. WARREN said that under his very peculiar circumstances, and as they had already evinced their affection, and had publicly acknowledged him under the disgraceful—no, he would recall that word, under the most honourable—circumstances; thus proving that they had made liberty their common cause; while he most respectfully and sincerely thanked them for their kind intention, he must earnestly request that they would forego that intention.

Dr. Warren then retired, after a very cordial greeting from all present.

The discussion was then resumed as to the *third* proposition, in reference to the restoration of Dr. Warren to the situation from which he had been expelled.

Mr. ROWLAND thought that the meeting ought not to place any impediment in the way of their negotiating with the Conference. The resolution seemed to say that they would not treat with the Conference unless Dr. Warren were first restored. That might endanger the situation of tens of thousands of their Societies.

Mr. GORDON thought it would be far better to put the resolution in the form of a request. He had a strong objection to the latter part of the resolution, in reference to the restoration of members to the Society, because it interfered with the independence of the Local Meetings.

Mr. TAYLOR would yield to none in warm and sincere attachment to Dr. Warren, but he thought if the resolution were presented in the form of a request, it would answer every purpose. It was evident enough, that there was no wish to abandon Dr. Warren; and if they moderated their requirements, and Conference refused to listen to them, they would go to the people with greater confidence, and the rights which were now refused them, they would be assisted to obtain in 1836.

After some remarks by Mr. Hughes, Mr. Redstone, Mr. Sissison, Mr. Sigston, Mr. M. Johnson, Mr. Cookman, and others, the resolution, with the omission of the words "*sine qua non*," was carried unanimously.

Mr. HUGHES then proposed the following resolution:—

"That as there are many members of Society sincerely attached to Methodism, who most decidedly object to the establishment of the Theological Institution, and who from the opinions they entertain thereon, conceive that the character of our ministry will thereby be injuriously altered, and the pecuniary resources of the Connexion diminished, and as it is obvious from the past prosperity of Methodism, without such an Institution, that it is not indispensable; therefore the Conference should consent rather than hazard a division that the subject should be laid before the respective Quarterly Meetings, and if disapproved of by the majority, the Institution be forthwith abandoned."

After a few observations, this resolution was carried unanimously.

The Committee then rose, and the House resumed.

The following gentlemen were chosen as the deputation to negotiate with the Conference, should that Body be willing to negotiate with them:—Messrs. Cookman, Livesey, Thomson, Parker, M. Johnson, Rowland, Hughes, Sanderson, Hickling, Haynes, and Gordon.

It having been reported that the Conference would not treat with the Delegates as such, but that they would not object to meet gentlemen who were members of the Society, some conversation on the subject ensued.

Mr. M. JOHNSON thought it monstrous that such an idea should be entertained. The Delegates were recognised, as such, in 1795 and 1797, nor were they cut off from the society because they freely expressed their opinions. Were members to be unjustly expelled; and then, when they remonstrated, to be told, that, because they were cut off, the Conference could not treat with them?

Mr. BARNES considered that every member of the Delegate body was eligible; and that if Conference refused to treat with them, as such, that was a very strong reason why the operations of the Association should be continued.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4.

On Tuesday morning, at six o'clock, the CHAIRMAN stated that he had received a communication, on the preceding evening, from the President of the Conference, which he was convinced would require the exercise of much patience and Christian forbearance. There was something in it so discourteous—so discouraging—so appalling, all circumstances considered—so very different from what they might justly have expected to receive, that his own feelings had been deeply excited, as he had no doubt theirs would be when they heard it read. It was as follows:—

The reading of this letter excited deep emotion.

Mr. M. JOHNSON observed that the reception of such an answer might almost justify the exercise of strong feeling. He would have the meeting, however, suppress all such feeling, and immediately prepare a communication in a tone as firm and dignified as possible.

Dr. TURTON could not conceive of any business which could come before the Conference of such vast importance, as to justify the delay of which the President's letter spake. When he thought of the state of the Connexion at large; when he considered how many had left it under circumstances peculiarly painful; he was sure that if the Conference had paid that attention to the subject which its importance demanded, they might have waved some of their ordinary business to attend to the Address which had been sent to them from that meeting. The Delegates were now called upon to maintain their dignity, and to act with firmness, though, at the same time, with courtesy.

The CHAIRMAN said, it must be remembered that the letters received from the President were official:—they were the result of consultation with his most confidential advisers; and it was not in the power of fifty preachers to alter them after they had been so deliberated. He could hardly have supposed that there would have been so strong an indisposition on the part of the Conference to treat with them, but that letter had put the extinguisher upon all his hopes.

Mr. ROWLAND said, that the Delegates were now arriving at a crisis,—a solemn and momentous crisis,—affecting, in its consequences, the well-being of thousands of immortal souls. A solemn responsibility now rested upon them. It became them to watch over their spirits,—to avoid all harshness of expression, and to act as in the immediate presence of God. He knew of no terms sufficiently strong, in which to express his views of that letter; but he trusted that he and all his brethren would be able to restrain their feelings.

The following letter, addressed to the President of the Conference, was then adopted by the meeting, and committed to the care of Messrs. Livesey and Hesketh:—

Surrey-street Chapel, Sheffield, Aug. 4, 1835.

Rev. Sir,—We are directed by the Delegates to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday, in reply to their address, requesting an interview with the Conference,—in which you state, that “urgent business will take up the whole time of the Conference for at least a few days,” and to express their deep concern at such an announcement.

The Delegates have left their homes and business at the urgent solicitation of many thousand members of Society, for the purpose of devising, if possible, in conjunction with the Conference, measures for putting an end to the alarming state of agitation and division now unhappily so prevalent throughout the Connexion.

Such a declaration, however, as that contained in your letter, will, if carried into effect, place it totally out of their power to assist in so desirable an object; the nature of their various engagements—as the Conference will readily conceive—requiring them to return to their respective homes before the period mentioned by you.

The Delegates beg solemnly to press upon the Conference the absolute necessity of their availing themselves of the opportunity now afforded, to terminate strife and disunion in the Connexion; and they urge the deep and awful responsibility which must inevitably attach to a refusal—for such, under the circumstances, they cannot but regard the delay—to accede to so reasonable and important a request.

In the hope that the Conference will reconsider the subject, and grant the required interview, *during some part of to-day at the latest*, to hear the statements of the Delegates, they will anxiously wait till twelve o'clock a communication to that effect.

Signed on behalf of the meeting,

GEORGE COCKMAN, Chairman.
RALPH GRINDROP, Secretary.

Intelligence was given to the Chairman that the Rev. Robert Emmett had been expelled by the Conference.

At nine o'clock resolutions were carried inviting Dr. Warren and Mr. Emmett to attend and assist the meeting in its deliberations.

Mr. EMMETT, on being introduced to the meeting, was warmly greeted. He appeared before them, he said, in a new character, as a member of that body, and no longer a member of the Conference; but much more honoured in being a member of the Delegates' meeting than in being a member of the Conference. For many years he had travelled with satisfaction; and had reason to bless God that many souls had been given to him during his ministry. He had heard of some fruit of his labour in the Workshop Circuit, which he had preached in on the preceding Sabbath. God was with them of a truth, and they were much blessed. Mr. Emmett then proceeded to state briefly his case, and the circumstances of his expulsion; having done which, he adverted to the subject of Methodist Reform. He had engaged, he said, in that work from a conviction of its necessity, and should feel it to be his duty to unite more fully with his friends in the promotion of their great objects.

A resolution was then carried unanimously, expressive of deep sympathy with Mr. Emmett in his expulsion from the Conference.

Dr. WARREN then entered the meeting, and was received with repeated cheers. He returned thanks for the proofs of cordial affection with which they had received him, and then proceeded to give an account of what had taken place in the Conference, when sentence was pronounced upon him by the President.

A resolution was then carried with acclamations expressive of hearty and cordial thanks to Dr.

Warren, for the noble defence which he had made before the Conference, and of sympathy with him under circumstances so extraordinary and deeply to be deplored.

Dr. WARREN said that the expression of condolence and affection embodied in the resolution just past, laid him under fresh obligations. He did not know exactly how he stood in reference to the Association; but he certainly had no wish to be in the way of any arrangements they might make as to negotiating with Conference, if they thought they could proceed better without him than with him. But if they should think, under all circumstances, that it would be as well to take him along with them, he would say, that if they thought they were more likely to do good by protracting the conflict, why then, in the name of God, he would buckle on the armour. Should they determine otherwise, he would retire, with the consideration of having done what he could, and would leave the issue in the hands of an allwise and gracious Providence.

A number of addresses were then read from various Circuits some of which had sent delegates. Among the places named, were Stockton, Lynn, Lane End, Clitheroe, Sheerness, Edinburgh, Poole, Tavistock, Manchester (first Circuit), Carlisle, Worksop. Most of the addresses deplored the present state of things, and contained pledges of attachment to the principles of the Association. They were, for the most part, signed by official characters; to some of them the signatures were numerous. There were some contributions also announced, towards defraying the expenses of the Chancery suit.

Mr. REDSTONE made a communication respecting Guernsey. About two years ago he had formed some acquaintances there, who called to see him a few days before at Winchester. He found that they were quite alive to the cause of Methodistical Reform. Having a man of peace stationed with them, there had been no agitation; but they were waiting anxiously the result of the deliberations of Conference. Should Conference refuse to redress the evils of which they complained, they were determined to exert themselves in the promotion of the good cause of freedom. Mr. Le Page would have gladly attended the meeting of Delegates; but had not made suitable arrangements before he left Guernsey.

Some conversation then ensued on the subject of Chapel Deeds. The Trustees in several of the disturbed circuits wished for advice, as the Conference party had, in some instances, threatened them with Chancery suits. A sub-committee was appointed to consider that subject.

Mr. HICKLING, of Birmingham, in the course of conversation, made a statement as to certain expressions said to have been used by the late Dr. A. Clarke. Dr. Clarke when on a visit at his father's house, had expressed his deep sympathy with the friends at Leeds; and with reference to the proceedings of Conference he said, "They have been for many days doing the Devil's business, and they are doing it just as the Devil would have it done." This statement had since been contradicted by his father; but he could only account for that contradiction, on the ground of his father's loss of memory. He had related the circumstance again and again in his hearing, and it was quite a current matter through the whole town. Then, again, as to Mr. Watson's "Affectionate Address," Dr. Clarke observed, that the persons who had answered Mr. Watson had fairly thrown him on his back, and that he could not get up again!

A letter was announced as having been received from the President of the Conference, in answer to that sent by the Delegates in the morning. It was as follows:—

Carver-street, Sheffield, Aug. 4th, 1835.

The note of Mr. Cookman and Mr. Grindrod, dated August 4th, has been received by the President. The regular, and absolutely necessary, business of the Conference, they must be aware, is at least as urgent and important, as any of those extraordinary proceedings to which the President is requested to call the immediate attention of that Body. The general order of the business of the Conference has for many years been defined and established by Rule; and some parts of it are indispensably preparatory, as was stated in a former note, to those religious services which have been publicly announced, both from the pulpit and the press, for this evening and to-morrow evening, and which it is impossible to postpone. The President has already taken measures for bringing the subject of the Address, which bears the signatures of Mr. Cookman and Mr. Grindrod, before the Conference, at the earliest opportunity; and he hopes that it may be in his power to return an answer to their application, on, or before, Thursday morning at twelve o'clock. The President will be sorry if this delay should subject the gentlemen concerned to any material inconvenience; but they must be sensible, on reflection, that the proper and usual business of a public assembly, like the Conference, whose sittings are legally limited to a definite period, which they have no power to alter or enlarge, cannot and ought not to be altogether subjected to the wishes of other parties, with whom no previous appointment had been or could have been made.

To Mr. G. Cookman and Mr. R. Grindrod.

R. REECE, President.

Some conversation ensued as to the unsatisfactory nature of the communication.

Mr. M. JOHNSON repeated the statement which had been made at Manchester, as to the way in which the Leeds deputation had been treated by the Conference in 1827.

Mr. GORDON said, that it was a perfect absurdity, a downright piece of nonsense, for a man to state that he had not time to tell a person whether he would give them an audience or not. Such a note was a reflection on the moral and intellectual character of the writer.

The CHAIRMAN recapitulated the progress of the negotiations with the Conference, and thought that it was highly disrespectful in them so to treat a business in which the preachers themselves had so deep an interest. He must say, that the conduct of the Conference was not only unjustifiable but reprehensible. And, after all, there was no specific promise that they should be received! The letter must be regarded as a tacit refusal.

Mr. GORDON said, that loss of time was not the only evil connected with this delay. In 1797, the Conference delayed the business, in order that the Delegates might not have possession of the public ear before themselves. So it was settled, and the Conference sent forth its falsities before the truth could be circulated. They did the same in the case of Mr. Kilham. They would not allow him any of the documents necessary for his defence, till they had every thing prepared to lay

before the public, and the other party had no means of counteracting the mischief. So they would do now if they were able.

Dr. WARREN thought that after the early and successful intimations which the Delegates had sent to the Conference, under the most solemn and important circumstances which ever came before them, involving so many momentous consequences, the conduct pursued by the Conference was most disrespectful. He had strong misgivings that they were preparing to make their statements public. He had to thank God, on his own account, that they had a *Christian Advocate*, and that through that medium a statement of his trial was made public, before the Conference had time to prepare their statement.

Mr. WALLACE suggested that Conference should be told plainly, that if they did not give the Delegates a meeting that night, plans must be laid for their future operations.

Mr. BARNES was of opinion that the Delegates ought to act as men of business, and not allow themselves to be trifled with any longer. If they met a Committee of the Conference, they would probably find that they had to deal with Jesuits; it would be better for them to declare that their hopes were at an end, and at once proceed to business.

Mr. HUGHES had hitherto considered that they were sending in their flags of truce, and that hostilities had ceased. They had been aiming to bring their minds to peaceful conclusions, and to make their differences meet the Conferential views of their opponents. And what had the Conference been doing in the mean time? Had they held out a flag of truce? Was it in a peaceful spirit that they deprived Dr. Warren of his privileges as a brother and a Christian minister? Was it in a peaceful spirit that they added another victim, Mr. Emmett? Was it in a peaceful spirit that they expelled another brother, Mr. Averill? And how many more were to follow? He was afraid that the Delegates must now unfurl the flag of war, and unsheathe the sword—the sword of the Spirit. They had indulged hope; but now there did not appear to be a shadow of success, and they must prepare for the conflict of another year. His prayer was, May God defend the right! He hoped the attention of a sub-committee would be directed to suitable preparations. Public meetings must now be held in every place, beginning at Sheffield. Conference was, no doubt, taking its measures; sending its ambassadors in every direction; telling the people how harmonious they had been; how very successfully they had treated the Doctor's case; and what further they intended to do. Conference wished to steal a march upon them. But should they? ("No, no," from many persons.) No! why, then let them come forward and help! Men of Israel, help! and let the motto adopted be, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!"

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS thought that it was now time to treat with the Conference sword in hand. They could treat as well in armour as without. They should go in a calm, conciliating spirit; but they should be prepared to act in case of a refusal. Whatever reception they might meet with, they should be careful still to exercise a Christian spirit.

Mr. M. JOHNSON observed that the correspondence which they had hitherto had with the Conference was calculated to produce great dissatisfaction. The most objectionable part of it was, that the Conference declined stating whether they would meet them at all: five minutes might have sufficed for that. All allusion to that point was studiously avoided. A master-hand was at work: it was evident to all by whom that letter was dictated. An answer ought to be sent, pointing out its chicanery; giving the Conference to see that the cloven foot was discovered—that, however it might be wrapped up, its ugliness was detected, and it was hated.

Dr. WARREN would undertake to say, from the experience of many years, that, if the Conference were engaged in the examination of young men preparatory to their full admission, there was no part of the Conferential business which would better allow of the introduction of the business of the Delegates. One third of the preachers were generally wandering about, and did not even go into the Conference, during such examinations. It was most important in a spiritual sense, but still it did not prevent a most efficient committee from being appointed. His opinion was, that it was the intention of Conference to trifle with them.

Mr. GORDON confirmed the statement of Dr. Warren. When he was examined, about a third part of the platform gentlemen were absent. Even Mr. Bunting himself was absent during the greater part of the time; and he should like to know what Conference business of any importance could be transacted in the absence of Mr. Bunting.

Mr. THOMPSON was gratified to find that the Delegates wished to meet the Conference on fair and equitable terms. He hoped that they would not be too hasty, lest Conference should say, that they had broken off the treaty just as they were willing to meet them. After witnessing the piety, the wisdom, the sound sense of the delegates, he should be sorry to find that there was any drawback.

Mr. PARKER was disposed to act cautiously; still he thought they should urge it on Conference to give them an earlier reply. It had been suggested that but one hand could have written that letter; the person meant, he supposed, was Dr. Bunting; and he said that Conference "could not" treat with them. It had been intimated that Conference would meet some of them as individuals, but that it would not meet them as a body. He could scarcely suppose that Conference would refuse them an interview altogether.

Mr. GORDON hoped the Delegates would not place themselves in a false position. Writing to Conference implied a disposition for peace; but if they accompanied it by a threat, the preachers might say, You have appealed to Cæsar, then to Cæsar you shall go. That was a favourite phrase in the Conference. If the letter in question was written by Dr. Bunting, no doubt his object was to irritate, and to drive the persons addressed to some measure of agitation, at which he would rejoice. On that ground he (Mr. Gordon) objected to holding public meetings, and thought that they might be the means of doing mischief to the cause they were intended to promote. He should recommend the appointment of a sub-committee to draw up a letter, in which the absurdities of the last communication from Conference should be pointed out, as well as the contradictions contained in the former

letters. Nothing would fix the attention of Dr. Bunting more fully than the discovery that he was found out.

A sub-committee was appointed to draw up a letter to the President.

At three o'clock, some conversation ensued as to the state of the funds connected with the Chancery suit.

Mr. SANDERSON stated that 1184*l.* had been received by him, in the way of donations and collections, towards defraying the expenses of that suit; which, with monies subscribed by the Association, and some small sums still in the hands of Dr. Warren, would leave about 500*l.* still to be provided for. The expenses of the suit were about 2315*l.*

Mr. HUGHES suggested that a plan should be proposed for wiping off the remainder of the debt. If the members of the Association would make simultaneous efforts, he had no doubt but they would have the honour of paying off this debt before the Conference party had paid theirs. If so, it would be proved that liberal principles could do much more than the principles of irresistible and irresponsible power. He did not wish to speak ostentatiously of the Manchester friends, but he had no doubt they would raise 50*l.*, in addition to taking full care of Dr. Warren. He was astonished at the liberality with which they had come forward at the recent yearly collection. Many of them had given from 1*s.* to 5*s.* each.

The CHAIRMAN said, that, if the members of the Association would average 3*d.* each, the debt would be at once wiped off.

The suggestion was approved of, and many present pledged themselves to adopt it.

Mr. EDWARDS, of Frodsham, stated that he had recently had some conversation on the subject in his family; in the course of which his mother had said, referring to his brother, "Dr. Warren has been instrumental in the conversion of my son; and, rather than he should be in the back-ground, we will give him the freight of one of our vessels!"

Captain BARLOW then moved the appointment of a committee of finance, in reference to the general affairs of the Association.

The various letters which had been sent to the President of the Conference were then read; and the copy of another letter to be addressed to them, in answer to the one last received, was also read and adopted most unanimously. It was as follows:—

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CONFERENCE.

Surrey-street Chapel, Aug. 4th, 1835.

Rev. Sir,—The Wesleyan Delegates now assembled in Surrey-street Chapel, cannot but lament that you should have deemed it necessary to transmit to them the letter which they this morning received. They beg to state, that it was not with reference to any "previous appointment which *had been made*" that they addressed themselves to you, but with reference to the appointment of some mode of personal communication which they wished to *be made*. They cannot conceive why a respectful request to be favoured with such communication should have been designated by you "extraordinary proceedings," nor how any business, however "defined and established," and with whatever "urgency" connected, could be able to restrain the Conference from simply forming and expressing an opinion, whether it would grant the interview requested or not.

What the "*measures*" are which seem from your statement necessary to be taken, before the subject of the address which has been sent to you can be brought before the Conference, the gentlemen in whose names I write are at a loss to conjecture; as they had deemed, according to a previous intimation of yours, that it was only necessary to "present it, at a suitable opportunity, to the Conference, and obtain the instructions of your brethren on the subject."

It cannot with propriety be said, that the "*immediate*" attention of your body was requested to this subject, when so much time had elapsed between your receiving the address of the delegates, and the forwarding the address to which you refer, although they did not anticipate that you would, or could, have adopted intermediate measures, ere the attention of the Conference was drawn to that document. "With the proper and usual business" of the Conference the delegates have no desire to interfere, much less have they given the slightest intimation, or conceived the most distant thought, of "*altogether subjecting* that business to their own wishes." They certainly did not think it would have been stepping beyond the bounds of your duty, if you had, ere this, made known their request to the Conference; and they confidently expected, within some short period, to have received information from you, whether or not the personal interview which they solicited could be granted.

With whatever patience they might have waited for such an interview, had it been promised to them, they are convinced that you "must be sensible, on reflection," that they could not view it as other than strange, that you should request them to wait two days longer, before they can be assured whether such a promise can or cannot be given.

It excites serious alarm in the minds of the delegates, that you should have said that no previous appointment with them "*could have been made*." Though aware of the fact that an appointment with lay gentlemen previous to the assembling of Conference *had been made*, the equivocal nature of this expression leads them to fear that their stay in Sheffield may be useless. They hope that the insertion of such an expression, previous to ascertaining "the instructions of your brethren on the subject," was an inadvertency; but they earnestly press upon your notice the propriety of informing them, within the shortest possible time, whether or not their request for a personal interview will be acceded to, as this, though you have not referred to it, was the point to which their address tended, and as an answer to this request is necessary to their forming a judgment on the expediency of remaining in Sheffield till the time you mention.

A definite answer will be expected to-morrow morning.

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.

Mr. AVERILL, who had that morning been expelled from the Conference, was then introduced to the meeting, and was received with great cordiality.

Mr. ROWLAND was sure that Mr. Averill was entitled not only to their sympathy, but to their thanks and admiration, for the magnanimous defence which he had made, as he understood, before the Conference, under such very peculiar circumstances. A young minister standing up amongst more than 400 ministers, and boldly defending his principles, ought to be regarded with affection and admiration.

A resolution to that effect was carried unanimously.

Mr. J. Wood then proceeded to lay before the Delegates a plan for the future operations of the Association, in the event of their not being able to obtain what they wished from the Conference. That Association differed from all other systems of agitation. Their object was to collect and unite, and not to divide and scatter. They had carefully endeavoured to steer clear of the errors into which their predecessors had run, and they fully hoped by union, and by perseverance in the plans which had been laid down, finally to accomplish their object. He was convinced, that, if their efforts had been more *simultaneous*, the whole Connexion would, by that time, have been impressed with the importance of Methodist Reform. The operations of the Association were distinguished by their simplicity, so that wherever they had gone and told a plain, straightforward tale of their grievances, their opponents were confounded,—their principles were established,—and numerous friends were gained. At Liverpool, for instance, their numbers at first were small, but they called a public meeting, and stated their case, and they gained nearly a thousand converts at once. The power of the Association was now become great; and that power qualified them with ability to bring back Methodism to its original purity. Mr. Wood then stated his firm conviction, that the present was the proper time for them to pursue their objects. The majority of the Connexion was, as yet, in a state of ignorance: that ignorance was the stronghold of the Conference; let that be removed, and the way was open before them. The onus of the various operations had hitherto rested, mainly, on Manchester and Liverpool; he would now have each Association to consider that it was its duty, as far as possible, to diffuse their principles. It was important now to fix upon a plan for their future operations, as an opportunity like the present meeting might not return for some time. If they suffered their proceedings to be protracted, their force would be weakened; and, for the sake of peace, some of their members would either give up the agitation, or retire into other Societies. Mr. Wood then recommended that Branch Associations should be formed in every District throughout the Connexion, with an efficient Committee for extending its operations,—that suitable agents and lecturers should be appointed, who should hold public meetings, distribute *Tracts*, recommend the *Christian Advocate*, &c.; and employ every other suitable means of diffusing information. Care should be taken also, that the spiritual interests of the people were duly regarded, and that the revival of pure and undefiled religion should be made a main consideration with all the members, and especially with all the preachers of the Association.* An active correspondence also should be kept up between the various Branch Associations and the Central Committee. He concluded an address of great length and ability, by observing, that the necessity for such operations rested on the ground that if Conference refused their reasonable requests, they had no other alternative.

A number of places were then named in which it was judged proper that public meetings should be held, as soon as possible; and a number of persons were proposed to take part in those meetings.

An estimate of the probable expenses connected with these operations for the ensuing year was then laid before the meeting; but it was referred for revision to the finance committee.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5.

On Wednesday morning, at six o'clock, the question as to the continuance of the operations of the Association during the ensuing year was discussed at considerable length.

Mr. ROWLAND had never been sanguine as to the result of their application to the present Conference. He was too well aware of the colossal and extending power of the Conference, to indulge any lively hope that the grievances of the people would be redressed. But, however obstinate and pertinacious the Conference might now be,—however their power might, as it did, engender pride and arrogance—they must, in the result, come down. Of that he was as certain as that he was now present in that meeting. If the Delegates only acted with unanimity, with cordiality, and in the fear of the Lord, with a single eye to his honour and glory; if they only adopted wise and deliberate measures, and carried them out with firmness, with unanimity, with dependence on the blessing of God, he was fully satisfied that their wise, moderate, rational, Scriptural requirements of reform must eventually be conceded to them. They owed it to themselves, to the Wesleyan Body, and to the Christian world, to maintain their operations till their object was gained. And they had adequate means of so doing. They had formed their Association: they had made their case known; and, to an extent far beyond what they could have reckoned upon, they had been successful. To prove that, he need only refer to the great mass of letters which were now lying before them. After they had thus prepared the minds of their friends—after they had appealed to the Conference—after they had excited such just hopes in the breasts of thousands—what must be the result of a pertinacious refusal on the part of the Conference? Their apparatus was so simple, and their lecturers would have such means of informing the people, that, when they met again, their success would be triumphant. The people would have become so enlightened, the folly and obstinacy of the Conference would have become so apparent, that the just desires of the Association must be gratified. That Association had an instrumentality—an instrumentality for good or evil—for good he firmly believed—an instrumentality for disturbing the minds of thousands of the society. Hitherto they had persuaded the people to keep together: and he believed there was a strong desire on their part to keep together, and to stand by their brethren who had been so unjustly expelled. An instance of that occurred at the recent meeting at Newton, near Manchester. It was an open meeting, as were all the meetings of the Association; and, when it was proposed to that meeting that the operations of the Association should be continued another year, in the result of an unsuccessful application to the Conference, that meeting, with one united voice, pledged itself to go with the Association. He con-

* In cases where it was rendered necessary by circumstances, the erection of temporary buildings of wood, or tabernacles, was recommended, and the Delegates were informed that Mr. Hughes would supply them with lithographic plans for such erections, and furnish them with all necessary information.

cluded by expressing his firm conviction, that, if the Association proceeded as it ought, they would, in less than three months, multiply their numbers by tens of thousands.

Mr. TAYLOR assured the meeting that nothing could give him greater pleasure than to see the Society restored to peace and unity. When the Association was first formed, his object was to inquire into the line of conduct it intended to adopt, and to ascertain whether real grievances existed, and if so to what extent. Nothing but real cases of wrong could have induced him to agitate or disturb. He had not thought that the preachers could have exercised such arbitrary power, and hence he had not minutely examined the code of discipline. When he ascertained that there were real evils in the system, he determined to oppose those evils by every possible means. The evils of which they complained were not trifles: they were calculated to impair and destroy those heavenly and divine principles which ought to be the prevailing characteristics of the ministers and the members of every Christian church. There could be no true prosperity where there was not love; and many of the measures of the Conference, so far from producing love, were calculated to excite displeasure and disgust. As Christians, therefore, they ought not to rest till those stumbling-blocks were removed out of the way. The preachers were dwelling continually on the horrors of agitation: the very idea of agitation was said to be contrary to the precept which enjoined us to follow peace with all men. But agitation was a good or an evil, according to the principle on which it proceeded, and the motives by which it was induced. He was convinced that if they were successful in conveying to the minds of the people a just idea of the nature and reasons of their agitation, they would soon have the people with them, and the work of agitation would come to a speedy end. He believed that nothing would please the Conference more, than to drive the discontented persons to unite with other professing bodies of Christians, or to leave the Connexion, or to form themselves into distinct societies. Were they to do so, they might indeed secure their own personal peace, but the shackles would remain on the neck of the society at large, to an interminable period. It was their duty, therefore, to persevere; and they had noble precedents and examples. Jesus Christ himself was an agitator; the apostles were agitators; they came to disturb a false security, and to undermine and destroy improper principles: that was the object of the Wesleyan Reformers; and if they were influenced by just motives, success would crown their efforts. He believed that it was as much their duty to protest against the evils of which they complained, as it was to protest against drunkenness, or dishonesty, or any other vice. Had their forefathers come to the conclusion to which, he trusted, they were now come, the Connexion would not have been split into so many distinct societies, and the great object at which they were now aiming, would have been long ago achieved. In Manchester he knew but of one individual among them who was not determined to go forward to obtain their just rights. The language of the majority was, "We have been robbed of our rights, and we cannot submit to be deprived of them without, at least, making an effort to regain them!" When the question was put, as to whether the operations should be continued for another year, it was carried with unanimity and enthusiasm. Let them but persevere, and their exertions would be crowned with success.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS said that formerly he had but little idea of agitating; he thought that they had no right to meddle with such affairs, and that, if they did not like the state of things, they might leave the Connexion. But on examining the Rules he found that they had a right, as Methodists, to agitate. The rule respecting the admission to Society was, that there should be a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and that the sincerity of such desire should be evinced by fleeing from the wrath to come—by doing all possible good—and by attending on all the means of grace. Agitation when properly conducted was right; they were told not to suffer sin upon their brother, but in any wise to reprove him. The Conference had refused to hear them, and yet it could assign no reason for that refusal. The Conference possessed power, and power was a thing which no man would readily give up, and which most were liable to abuse. He would always be cautious as to remarks upon individual character, and especially as to the characters of Christian ministers: their characters were identified with the prosperity of the church, and they could not hope for success if their characters were not only pure but free from all suspicion. He wished the Conference preachers to be above suspicion, and therefore he would remove from them the temptations to do wrong. He considered, further, that agitation was necessary, in order to eradicate existing evils: that was the principle on which Mr. Wesley acted; he did not abandon the Church because there were evils in it: that, he declared, he would not do; but he pointed out those evils with boldness and fidelity, and laboured in every possible way to have them removed. Methodism belonged to him (Mr. Cruickshanks), and no man had any right to tell him to give it up. If he were on board a vessel, he might tell the captain of any thing which he saw wrong; but it was by no means necessary that he should abandon the vessel. It was not the part of a Christian minister to tell the people that if they did not like the Connexion they might leave it. Christ did not act so; nor did he abandon the sheep who had wandered from the fold; he sought after them, and rested not till he had restored them. Again, agitation was warranted by Christianity: a system was established, which was calculated to invade the rights of the King of Zion; and surely they were warranted to call upon those who introduced the wrong to return to Him, and to be guided by His laws. They were bound to open the eyes of such men, and to do it in a Christian temper, even though they were met by tempers that were un-Christian. Agitation was of importance also, as it regarded the people: much ignorance prevailed in the Societies, even in the higher classes. The preachers wilfully kept the people in ignorance, on matters of church government: the salvation of souls was the one thing on which they ever insisted. That was a matter of unspeakable importance, but there were other things to which a Christian was bound to attend. The ignorance of the people was the great source of evil, but he had found, from experience, that where the people were addressed with clearness and simplicity, conviction had been produced. Mr. Cruickshanks then adverted to the means to be employed. If they would agitate aright, they must take care of the interests of religion: they must aim to promote revivals: they must avail themselves of the excitation to lead men to Christ for salvation: they must take care

to promote the piety and zeal of the members in the respective Circuits, lest division and discord should creep in. If they managed the Circuits as regularly as if they were under the care of the accustomed ministry; if they went forth into the highways and hedges, compelling men to come in, they would succeed to keep the Societies together, and to increase the numbers; and they would also stir up their brethren in the Conference to do the same thing. That was the secret of the success which had attended the labours of the Protestant Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, and others. They went forth preaching Christ with simplicity in every possible direction, and God was with them in a pre-eminent degree. The lecturers of the Association should be true Missionaries; preachers of the Gospel of Christ; men that would be careful to plant the standard of the Cross; men who would meet, not only the opposition of Methodists, but the opposition of Satan himself. There would be various little Societies broken off from the general body; and to them the agents of the Association ought to go, to preach the Gospel, and to administer the ordinances to them. By such means; by establishing Societies, and by collecting regular class-monies, they would have the means of carrying on their operations, of becoming a blessing to their friends, and of striking terror into the hearts of their enemies. Something had been said as to the impropriety of treating with their armour on; but they must prove to their enemies that they were willing to work as well as to fight; and if they wrought in a proper spirit, the other party would work too, and God would be with them: darkness would flee away; light would be diffused; and he had no doubt, that, by the next Conference, the preachers would be as willing to treat with them, as they were willing to treat with the preachers.

Mr. GREENHALGH was fully convinced that they ought to work as well as to fight. Nothing less than a deep and abiding conviction of duty, would have prompted him to leave a peaceful course and to take up arms. But when he ascertained the real state of things, he found that it was necessary not only to assume the posture of a workman, but of a soldier. He buckled on the armour, and so went forth to duty. And he thought it his duty to continue the warfare till the object was gained. They proposed to themselves a thorough reform in Methodism, being convinced that nothing less would produce the Christian liberty and peace which they ought to enjoy. At first he had not thought that the evils were so numerous, though he had occasional misgivings. The friends of the New Connexion and others aimed from time to time to open his eyes; but still he had a notion that the preachers had a right, a sort of undefined right, to exercise an irresponsible power. He never saw the extent of the evil till he felt it himself: he had felt a little when Dr. Warren was visited with the power of the preachers; but when he found that for a proper act—performed from a proper motive—he was subject to be expelled, and was actually expelled, and that in the most awful way; he felt that a power did exist—that such power was irrational and unscriptural, and that it was his duty to oppose it. They were bound to do all they could to overturn such a power. His constituents were numerous; they amounted to several hundreds; and, to a man, they were determined upon agitation for another year, should it be found necessary. He had given them but little reason to hope for a removal of their grievances this Conference; but, in another year, by the diffusion of light, he had no doubt that their object would be carried safely, harmoniously, and triumphantly. To discontinue their operations now, after having unsettled the people, would be an act of immorality; for he held that for men not to do what they believed it was their duty to do, was immoral. The people would else be scattered; they would enter into various other Christian bodies; some would join the New Connexion; some, as was the case at Manchester, would become Quakers; and many, sickened at the lordly proceedings of the Conference, and disgusted with the fickleness of the Association, who pledged themselves not to rest till their object was gained, would settle down into Infidelity. As honest men, therefore, as consistent Christians, they were bound to go forward. And why should they not? what was there to hinder them? They had thousands with them—with them in head, in heart, and in pocket. Most of the friends around him seemed disposed to engage with new ardour; and the work they had undertaken they were well able to perform. They had many encouragements and inducements. Had the Reformers—had Luther, Ridley, Knox, or Wesley, acted with hesitancy or indecision, no reformation would have been effected. They must not act from policy or from expediency, but from a sense of duty. They had been robbed of their rights by a dishonest system, and not to go and demand the payment of their rights, would be to offer a premium for dishonesty.

Mr. AVERILL said, that, if he merely consulted his own feelings of body and of mind, he should keep at peace. But when he considered that they were real evils of which so many complained, he was convinced that the work of agitation must be continued till their object was achieved. In the Camelford Circuit, on giving the tickets, he had never found the people in a better state. Numerous revivals had taken place; and abundant proof was afforded that God would take care of his own work. It was their duty to go forward. Proof had been afforded, in the county from which he came, of the consequences of dereliction of duty. An individual had left them, and had gone over to another section of the Christian church; he had caused many others to leave too: had he continued, the cause might have been strengthened to the amount of many hundreds. Were they to cease to agitate, hundreds would secede from the body, and settle down into different denominations. In Launceston and in Liskeard there were many reformers; they had sent no address to the Delegates' meeting, because they were waiting to see what the Conference would do. At Liskeard among a thousand members there was scarcely a dissentient voice. It became the Association, out of love to those who were with them, and to others who were waiting to join them, as well as from a regard to the principles of religious liberty, not to cease their operations under present circumstances.

Mr. EMMETT had been an advocate for retiring—for going quietly away. He had always been treated in a very affectionate and polite way by the preachers. But from what he had for some time seen, and from the vast body of documents which were on the table, he was convinced that it was his duty to proceed in the course marked out by the Association. Hundreds of his friends were disposed to go over into the New Connexion; but he was convinced that he should carry back such arguments as would induce them to remain with the Association. The preachers said, "Go

away from us." One of the preachers said so to him, and added, "Brother Emmett, you know you don't go away from Christ in going from us!" He (Mr. Emmett) wanted to make it evident that they sinned against God and against themselves to leave that church: their departure was not based on Scriptural principles. For it could not with propriety be said of them, what their opponents did sometimes slanderously say of them, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; and they went out that it might be made manifest they were not all of us." The preachers, therefore, were standing upon ground which they could not justify. That, he thought, was evident even to themselves; else, why did they so continually resort to abuse? When they stated their various doctrines, they said, "Thus saith the Lord;" but he was not aware that any such expression was used by them in the present controversy. The preachers said a great deal about the salvation of souls; and about the importance of minding better things;—of inducing sinners to turn to God, and of leading the people on in the way of holiness. Why, who doubted the truth of all that? Such work was, he was sure, congenial to the minds of all around him; they felt themselves under a heavenly influence while they said, "Behold the Lamb!" But it was equally their duty, to have the converted formed into churches, and to have those churches conducted on Scriptural principles. He had, therefore, thought that he must either leave the Connexion, or continue the present line of operation. After mature deliberation he had determined on the latter. They must use all possible means for enlightening the minds of the people;—they should say boldly to the preachers, "You shall not thus put us out of the Synagogue;—we will remain in the Connexion and aim at its complete purification." Thus they should speak and act, he would not say till the next Conference, but to the end of their lives. They had the marks of the divine approbation: he had once entertained doubts on that point, but those doubts were now removed. The Conference party pointed to the tokens of success. "See," they said, "how in one place 500, and in another place 500, souls are brought to God! Look at the thousands and tens of thousands, who are added to our Societies! Is not that a proof that God is with us?" Well; the Association could speak in the same way. What was the number of their members? perhaps not fewer than 50,000. And if such had been their success while the Association was in its infancy; surely, now that its principles were fully understood, they might reasonably hope, that, before the next Conference, they would have an augmentation of at least 100,000. He trusted that, without one dissentient voice, they would determine on continuing their operations.

Dr. WARREN considered the question as fairly settled. He was sure that there could be no hesitation on one point; namely, whether very severe injuries had not been inflicted by the Conference on some of the very best, the most pious, the most useful, the most worthy members of the Society. Some of their officers had been deprived of most important rights, and he believed they would confess also, that some of their Travelling Preachers had not been used well. Then, he observed that those who took the most active part in the operations of the Association were not raw, hot-brained youths, but some of the most serious, the most experienced, the most aged Christian members. He might dwell also on the conviction which he had in his own mind, that if Methodism was to be preserved and made a blessing to the world, the only way was to bring it back to the state in which it once was. Another argument for renewed exertion was, the Unity of the Conference. They had, in one week, expelled three of their preachers, and that not for immorality;—was not that, in itself, a proof that the body was most corrupt? He had seen and felt enough to make him thank God most sincerely, that the Conference were not possessed of *civil* as well as ecclesiastical power! If there existed such a thing as common honesty, and truth, and justice; if there was a God in heaven, and if he approved of the Methodist Conference, how came it to pass that nearly 500 of its preachers, with only one exception, held up their hands for expelling from the Body, men that were not immoral? That was surely a proof of a corrupt—of a *very* corrupt state of things! Then, another thing struck him:—they were thus parting with their members, and with their preachers, without one word of conciliation! Ought they not, as Christian pastors—as men having the care of souls—to aim to soothe the minds of those who are vexed, and to instruct and set right those whom they declared to be wrong? And not one word about concessions! What! were there no wrongs? was all proved to be right? was there to be no word about conciliation—about setting things to right? He would add nothing to what had been said as to the success of the Association; it was enough for him to remind them that they were pledged. The people out of doors were almost unanimous; they had been informed of all that had been done, and the Association had encouraged the belief, that they would persevere in the course in which they had set out. Surely, then, they would not relax their exertions. Gratitude to their friends, also, required perseverance. How many of their officers, and members too, had made great exertions and great sacrifices, in order to promote the cause! Should they cease to agitate the societies till the desired result was obtained, how could they evince their gratitude to those zealous and disinterested men? Dr. Warren here read some extracts from a letter just received from Manchester, in which the band of heroic men, who had nobly stood forward in behalf of the people, were spoken of in terms of high eulogium, and the people of that town declared that sooner than give up the struggle till the object was achieved, they would cheerfully prepare for a ten years' campaign. And should they then think of giving up? If they did, they might expect to lose all the advantages they had gained. Vast and astonishing accessions had been made to their strength; and that was another encouragement. Had they been going down hill—had there been any falling back, there might have been some pretext for relaxing their efforts. But with so many to cheer them on, with such encouraging letters, with increasing funds, with new and efficient energies, not to go forward would be absurd. Many events conspired to encourage. The finger of God had pointed out the necessity of Reform; and God had been pleased to grant them great and signal success; the discovery of the rules of the society, as published in 1798 and 1800; the absence from the Journals of the Conference of the Plan of Pacification and the Leeds Regulations; the universal dissatisfac-

tion with the tyranny of the preachers; together with many other circumstances which he might enumerate. Why, they might wait another century before such events would occur. The readiness with which their friends had come forward to liquidate the Chancery debt was another encouraging circumstance. They had only to mention their difficulties through the medium of the *Christian Advocate*, and money came to them from every part of the kingdom. In conclusion, Dr. Warren observed that he had been in the Wesleyan Body for upwards of thirty years, and had never till recently lifted up his voice in the way of agitation; but now, in the thirty-fourth year of his union with it, he was determined to lift up his voice against the tyranny and oppression which prevailed in the Body, and not to be silent till that tyranny and oppression had come to an end.

At nine o'clock the discussion was resumed.

One of the Delegates from Worcester thought it hard, that, after they had contributed according to their ability to the various funds of Methodism, a preacher should stand up in the pulpit and tell them, that, if they did not like Methodism, they might leave it. Mr. W. Bunting had recently been preaching a Missionary sermon; and, towards the close of it, he said, "There are persons not many miles from hence who talk of stopping the supplies;" and added, that those who did so "might expect that God would afflict their bodies to death, and send their souls to hell!" He mentioned it to the Superintendent of the circuit, but he wished to have the expression glossed over. The friends to the cause were but few at present in Worcester; but they were firm, and were not to be deceived by a pretended reform. They did not approve of agitation for its own sake; but they wished the most vigorous efforts to be adopted for the assertion and restoration of their rights.

Mr. LOWTHIAN was astonished that so plain a question should be argued. Some talked of a cessation of hostilities; but at Carlisle they had made provision for some years to come. They had erected a Tabernacle, and the architect said he had no doubt that it would stand for twenty years. If he were to go back and tell his constituents that the Association would relinquish its operations, he was sure that the people would go on of themselves.

Mr. WILKS, and Mr. HICKLING, dwelt on the necessity of persevering exertion. They stated, however, that they found some difficulty in Birmingham in obtaining suitable places, in which, to carry on the worship of God.

Mr. SISSISON said, that they had been similarly situated at Hull. They had, indeed, a pretty good chapel, but the friends were few in number, and they found it difficult to supply them with spiritual means. He objected to the word agitation; but pledged himself to do all he could to spread information. The proceedings of the Conference were founded in ignorance; let that ignorance be removed, and the system of oppression would fall to the ground. The injury which that system of oppression did to the preachers themselves, and the obstructions which it offered to the spread of the work of God, should urge upon all the necessity of renewed exertion.

Mr. THOMPSON reminded them, that much of their success would depend on the manner in which they carried on their operations. They must proceed with caution—with prudence—with firmness—with much prayer—and with patience. The heaven would take time to operate. The friends at Sunderland were anxious to diffuse all possible information.

Mr. BARNES said, that he had joined the Association as he had at first joined the Methodist Society, after mature deliberation; and, having done so, he was determined to continue his co-operation. As to what had been stated respecting Worcester, he would remark, that the Superintendent of that Circuit, Mr. Davies, had said, "If any one comes to the Delegates' meeting from Worcester, you may depend upon it he comes on his own account. All is quiet there." That was the way in which the preachers kept one another in ignorance. The fact was, that the brother from Worcester was regularly sent, and represented the views and feelings of those who sent him.

Mr. COOKMAN stated, that, in 1797, the late Mr. Thompson, of Hull, was Chairman of the meeting of Delegates. The late Alexander Mather, one of the members of Conference, told Mr. Thompson that the Delegates were mere politicians, and that they had adopted the principles of democracy which were spread at the period of the French Revolution. Those principles, he insisted, were not founded on the truth of God, but were the result of political agitation. Mr. Thompson listened to those suggestions of Mr. Mather, and withdrew entirely from the Delegates. Had he stood firm, the people might have obtained all they needed. He (Mr. Cookman) stated that fact to show the influence of the preachers. Each member of the Association had his personal friends, but, while he cultivated the advantages of friendship, care should be taken that the influence of friendship did not divert him from his purpose.

Mr. REDSTONE defended the use of the word agitation. In many cases the preachers themselves were violent agitators. Many were attached to their public ministry, and it was well known that many of the rich members stood by them, and expressed their determination to support Methodism, by which they meant Methodism in its present perverted, corrupted form. From that attachment many instances of persecution arose, and friendships of long standing were broken up. Affecting cases of that could readily be furnished. One such individual as he had referred to had said, that sooner than yield to the people what was desired, he would submit to be cannonaded. Mr. Redstone then stated, that at Winchester they had individuals of piety and talent for the work of the ministry; but they needed some kind of superintendence, and provision to be made for the administration of the Sacraments.

Mr. ROWLAND referred to the resolutions which had been advertised in the *Christian Advocate*, in connexion with the meeting at Newton. A preacher had asked if such resolutions had really been adopted, or if it was intended as a mere hoax. Being assured of the truth, that preacher said, "You had better cut off 50,000 from the Society at once, than come to a determination to agitate for another year." He (Mr. Rowland) had no doubt that the result of such agitation would be, the accomplishment of all their wishes.

After some further remarks by Mr. M. Johnson, Mr. Parker, Dr. Warren, and others, some resolutions were proposed, of which the following is the substance :—

“That this meeting, having deliberately, and, in the fear of God, considered the position in which it now stands, with reference to the Connexion, resolve unanimously, that it deeply deplores the obvious disinclination on the part of Conference, to promote, through the Delegates, an amicable adjustment of existing differences; and that the time already spent in correspondence with the President, without any satisfactory result, and the impossibility of the Delegates continuing much longer in Sheffield, render it absolutely necessary, however undesirable, at once to enter upon a discussion of ulterior proceedings. It was also resolved, to recommend to the friends of Methodist Reform, not to unite themselves with any other religious body, nor to form themselves into any distinctive community, but to act in concert, and remain associated together, until the Conference of 1836, under certain regulations, to be afterwards submitted, and to be denominated the Wesleyan-Methodist Association, whose object shall be to regain, and effectually secure, the rights and liberties of the Wesleyan community.”

Mr. LIVESEY expressed his pleasure at the propositions which had been adopted, and at the great unanimity which had prevailed, not only as to those propositions, but throughout the whole proceedings of the meeting. Union was strength, and the increase of union would be the accumulation of strength. He was fully convinced, that, in proportion as the great principles of the Association were diffused, thousands would come out to their help. When they were told that the Delegates had waited with all due patience for the Conference, and that, after all, their just hopes had been disappointed, they would unite in vast numbers, and, by next Conference, they would accomplish all their wishes.

The following communication was here received from the President of the Conference :—

Sir,—Your note, dated August 4th, was duly received last evening. I can now only repeat my former intimation, that you may confidently expect a communication from the Conference, in answer to your address, by twelve o'clock to-morrow.
August 5th, 1835.
R. REECE.

To Mr. G. Cookman.

The CHAIRMAN thought that letter quite as evasive as all the former. He considered that the Conference was treating them with the utmost contempt. He had rarely known such a course of conduct pursued towards any individuals. He could not but regard it as a designed insult, and was almost ready to declare that he should leave the meeting immediately.

Mr. BARNES said, that, as they were within twenty-four hours of the time proposed, he should be sorry to act too precipitately, lest their constituents should reflect upon them.

Mr. M. JOHNSON said that a report had been circulated, as to the intention of the Conference, the plain English of which was, “If you are members of society, we will allow you to come to us, when we will tell you how ill you have behaved, and send you home again. But if you are not members, we will have nothing to say to you.”

Mr. BARNES pledged himself, that, if the Conference made any such distinction, he, for one, would not listen to any thing they had to say.

Dr. WARREN said that from his knowledge of the character and communications of the man, whose signature those letters bore, it was perfectly clear that Conference was intending to trifle with the Delegates, and to gain time for some sinister purpose. They ought, therefore, to arm themselves against such inventions; but, if they should break off the negotiation, Conference would say, “O, what great things we would have done for you, if you would have waited to have listened to us.” He believed that there was no intention to treat; but, as he was aware of their chicanery, hopeless as the case was, he would have them wait till the hour appointed.

Mr. LIVESEY was quite sure that the Conference had some deep design; but still he was disposed to wait the result.

Mr. J. STEPHENS, of London, said that he believed he was in the possession of the ultimatum of Conference in reference to the Delegates. It was not their intention to hold any communication with them, and in any concessions they might make, they were resolved to give up no essential principle, nor would they yield to the pressure from without. They would not concede the right of the nomination of officers to the local courts—nor the right of expulsion to the members of the whole Church—nor yet allow freedom of discussion in Quarterly Meetings on any subject which did not affect the interests of the Circuit. It was therefore quite clear that the intentions of Conference was anything but pacific, that they had no desire to pour oil upon the troubled waters, or by timely interference, to restore the wide-spread beach which had so long affected the pure of the Connexion.

Mr. PARKER, after expressing his satisfaction on what had been done by the meeting, in reference to the various important subjects which had come before them, declared his full determination not to go to Conference as a member of the society, but only as a Delegate of that body.

Mr. ROWLAND, Mr. WALLACE, Mr. HUGHES, and others, concurred in what had been said by Mr. Parker, and rejoiced that a plan for the future operations of the society was now so nearly completed. By the delay of Conference, an opportunity had been afforded them of getting their armour and ammunition ready; and if, at twelve o'clock the next day, an order was given them to march, all would be ready.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS said that their great object should be to keep the weather gauge, while they were clearing their quarters, and getting up their guns. Then, when an opportunity offered, they would be able to bear down on the fleet, and to break the line. There was nothing like breaking the line. Let them begin at Sheffield. Let the Conference see that they had not been asleep, but employed in making suitable preparations. When the time came, let them proceed at once, and let the watchword be, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!”

The letter from the President being again read, it was resolved,

“1. That a communication having this morning been received from the President of the Conference,

again stating that our address to that body shall be answered by Thursday, at twelve o'clock, the members of the Delegates' Meeting will wait until that time for such reply.

"2. That, although the Meeting does thus determine to wait the reply of the Conference, until the period mentioned, by which that Body will be deprived of the possibility of alleging the refusal of the Delegates to treat with them even at their own time—unreasonable and unnecessary as such a demand under the circumstances is, yet the Delegates feel it a duty they owe to themselves individually, and to the Societies they represent, to place upon the minutes of their proceedings, a protest against such an unwarrantable course.

"3. That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the President of the Conference."

The latter resolution was afterwards withdrawn, and the two former were inserted in the Minutes.

Mr. J. WOOD then submitted the plan for future operations which he had proposed on the former day. The leading propositions were discussed and adopted. After this, as Mr. Wood was obliged to leave Sheffield, a resolution of thanks to him for his very able and efficient services, was carried unanimously. This tribute of respect was strongly supported by Dr. Warren, Mr. Parker, Mr. Gordon, and the Chairman.

It was then resolved, that the two committees at Manchester and Liverpool, should be merged in the Association of Delegates, and that the Association should henceforth be called "THE WESLEYAN-METHODIST ASSOCIATION."

At three o'clock a brief conversation ensued as to the course the deputation to the Conference should pursue, provided any distinction should be made between those who were members of Society and those who were not. The unanimous opinion was, that they should regard themselves as a deputation from that meeting, and refuse to acknowledge any distinction.

A letter was read which had just been received from one of the Societies in the Staffordshire Potteries, expressing its satisfaction with the operations of the Association, and its wish to unite with it.

Some questions having been proposed as to the trusts of chapels, the meeting resolved itself into a Committee for the consideration of the subject, Mr. Beynon in the chair. It was remarked, that though the meeting might not be competent to form a just decision as to the legal questions, yet some general hints might be thrown out, which might prove of practical utility.

The CHAIRMAN observed, that certain rights were connected with trust deeds; for, in virtue of his being a Trustee, though he had been expelled from the Society, he had taken his seat regularly in the Quarterly Meetings, to the great annoyance of certain personages.

Mr. GORDON said, that from various conversations he had engaged in with preachers, and from what he had heard as to the views of Conference, it appeared to him that the Conference was proceeding on the idea that the decision as to Dr. Warren's case, in the Court of Chancery, went to nullify the provisions of all Deeds, according to the will of the Conference. As to the Dudley chapels, it was said to be Methodist usage to refuse power to sell, unless an application for that purpose were made twelve months before. Supposing, however, that there were no such provision in the Deed, the case of Dr. Warren afforded no rule whatever which could be applicable to every other case which might be brought before the Trustees. The question as to Dr. Warren was, whether the parties had acted Methodistically; and, of course, Methodist law and usage were referred to. But, in the case of trust deeds, all the powers of which were defined by those deeds, Methodist usage could have no force at all. If a Trustee were put into the Court of Chancery as to any alleged violation of his trust, the only thing to which the Court could direct its notice would be, the Trust Deed on which the property was founded. In various deeds the condition about applying to Conference bears various forms; according to some, the application is to be made on the first day of Conference, others for six months, others for twelve months, previous to the intended sale, others when the consent of the President has been obtained. How Methodist law and usage could apply, it was, therefore, difficult to conceive. There were four points on which, as it appeared to him, the Trustees had considerable power. The first related to the absolute and unlimited power of sale which might be contained in any Trust Deed. The Deed of the chapel at Dudley contained such a power. Well knowing how the Conference was constituted, the power was inserted at the demand of the Trustees. They required a power to be inserted in the Deed, which authorised them to sell the chapel *when it could no longer meet its own expenses*. Mr. Thomas Stanley presented the deed to him, and requested him to sign it. He asked Mr. Stanley expressly, if the Chapel could be sold when it could no longer be supported, but out of the pockets of the trustees. Mr. Stanley assured him that such was the case, and on another occasion, he had stated that it could be sold to Mr. Gordon's father, and he (Mr. Gordon) could be put in as minister. The Deed stated, also, that a chapel might be sold *when the Society was dissolved—when any Act of the Legislature interfered with the worship—when the Trustees could not obtain money by notes, or bonds, or mortgages, &c.—or when the current expenses could only be paid out of the personal money of the Trustees*: it stated, also, that in all or either of those cases, all or the major part of the Trustees might absolutely sell, or dispose of, the chapel by public auction or private contract to any person or persons they might choose. What could be plainer than that? How the Conference could have any power in the teeth of such plain and positive statements, he could not conceive. The chapel did not pay its way; there were from ten to forty pounds deficient year after year; those deficiencies were made up by the Trustees, out of their own personal monies. The Treasurer was 150*l.* behind hand. The Trustees could not meet the demands but out of their own personal money; they could only borrow money on the understanding that they themselves had personal property. The Trustees could not support the chapel therefore. The preachers, Mr. Edwards and Mr. Franklin, could not succeed in getting the people to hear them, and they had only ruin staring them in the face. The Chapel was consequently sold. Now, if any Trust Deed contained such clauses (and there were more Deeds containing such clauses than Conference was aware of), such chapels might be sold. Those Deeds were made by lawyers who knew nothing of Methodism, and who would, of course, draw them up as Deeds were usually drawn up, and allow the chapels to be sold, when the expenses could no longer be met but in the way to which he

had referred. On that ground, the Conference had threatened to try the case in the Court of Chancery, with what hope of success he would leave the meeting to conceive. *Secondly.* Almost all Methodist Chapels might be sold without application to Conference, *if the Society connected with that chapel were dissolved.* That was a circumstance not likely to have occurred at the time the Deeds were made; but it was very likely to occur under existing circumstances. In the Dudley Circuit, Mr. Edwards crossed out *all* the names of the members, and so dissolved the Society in some places; and, in others, he did that which was equivalent, for he reduced the Society from hundreds to tens. Methodist radicalism, as it was called, would be sure to spread, and the preachers would be induced to dissolve the Societies in many places. He would, therefore, have them examine the Deeds.

It was here asked how that could be done, as, in many cases, the preachers kept the Deeds closely locked up.

Mr. GORDON said, that, in the Dudley Circuit, the Deeds were deposited in an iron-chest, but they contrived to unlock it, and to get the Deeds properly examined by legal gentlemen.

Dr. WARREN observed, that every Deed, if it was worth a farthing in point of law, was enrolled in Chancery, and extracts might be obtained for a trifling remuneration. Let the party applying, specify the name of the place, the date, and the names of the Trustees. If it were enrolled, a copy might be obtained; and, if not, the parties might set it at defiance.

Mr. GORDON resumed. The *Third* point was, *the nature of the appointment to the pulpits for which the parties so much contended.* The Deed of Declaration was made, not as to societies, but as to chapels. The appointments were to chapels only. The Deed spoke of the interest the Trustees had in the appointments as to particular chapels, and limited the power to those who were so appointed. The Trustees were to permit such persons to preach, and no others, without the consent of the Superintendent of the Circuit. But that provision did not mean that the Trustees were obliged to receive any person the Superintendent might choose to send. There were two exceptions: first, it was provided that no person whatever was to be appointed, except by the Conference; and then, the Model Deed said, that persons appointed by the Conference should occupy the pulpit, and *also*, persons appointed by the Superintendent. But there were no such deeds in the Dudley Circuit. He did not mean to ask whether the Conference had acted illegally in putting down preachers to *Circuits* instead of to chapels; that was not the point at present. In the Dudley case Mr. Edwards had split the Plan into two parts. He supplied the places with the nine preachers he had on his side, and he excluded the twenty-seven whom he had not on his side. In every case he had failed. The Trustees had sent for him; for they expressed no wish to exclude him, but told him that he had a right to be there, as he was the preacher appointed by the Conference; and that, if he were not there to preach, he was to be regarded as a delinquent, and might be put into the Court of Chancery. They did not refuse to admit the man who was regularly appointed; they did refuse to admit the persons whom he sent; and he could not go to the Court of Chancery to complain, because he himself was the delinquent. If such a plan were generally adopted, it would soon put a stop to the system of Methodism, or it would drive the Conference to make an equitable bargain with the people. "We will not hinder you from preaching in the chapels; we consent that you should send preachers to us; but unless you send twenty or thirty preachers to the Dudley Circuit, you cannot carry Methodism on there." Consultations had been held with Dr. Bunting, but nothing had been done to shake the opinion, he (Mr. G.) stated—and a lawyer to whom the Conference party had applied, had given a similar opinion. If the trustees would avail themselves of those hints, they might soon get a number of chapels for their own use. When Messrs. Edwards and Franklin had expelled so many members, they could not, with any face, stand up and preach to the people. Hence they were compelled to send for strangers. Mr. Waterhouse was sent for to do Mr. Edwards's preaching work. He was allowed to preach by courtesy, but he only got about 100 hearers, in a chapel which would hold upwards of 1000. The next Sabbath, Mr. Ingle, of West Bromwich, was sent for: he brought a force along with him; but he could not get possession of the pulpit. He stood up and gave out, "O, for a thousand tongues to sing;" and if he could have got "a thousand tongues" he might have succeeded; but he had only four or five tongues, and the other party had the "thousand;" so he went away, to all appearance, in no very blessed humour. Messrs. Edwards, Ingle, and Waddy, took coach for London; but Mr. Edwards very soon returned, and sent no more strangers to the chapels. That showed plainly that the Conference party were defeated; for, if they had power, they would do any thing at Dudley, however monstrous. For himself, they would not hesitate to put him into a tar-barrel, and set fire to it. They had procured constables; Mr. Ingle had tried the windows all round; all sorts of expedients were resorted to; they would have done *any thing* within the compass of possibility. But they went to London for advice, and the probability is that even Jabez concurred in the opinion that they had no such power. Then there was another point. A proper Methodist Deed was a deed without a title. It contained no disposable power of sale at all. It says that the chapel may be disposed of when it is no longer needed—when no preacher has been appointed to supply it—when the society is dissolved, and so on; but it says nothing as to difficulties in which the chapel may be involved; it gives no power of sale, but by an order from the Court of Chancery itself. Such a Deed he conceived to be illegal. He looked at the trustee of a chapel in the same light as an executor of a will. If the property left did not enable him to pay the legacies, &c., bequeathed, surely he had no right to pay them out of his own pocket! So it was with the trustee of a chapel. If the trustees were not such fools as to borrow money on their own *personal* responsibility, no power could make them do so. Then the Deed declared, that, when the Trustees ceased to be members of society, their connection with the chapel should cease also: that was a fallacious idea, and could only become honest and just on the ground that such trustees were first freed from all their liabilities. As to chapels which were in debt, the trustees might say to the Conference, "You have an undoubted right to the chapels, but there are debts upon them; we have incurred heavy responsibilities; remove those debts, free us from those

responsibilities, and you shall have the chapels; but, if you will not do that, you have no right to them, and we can sell them." The trustees cannot have property in a chapel, if it can support itself; but, if not, they must support it, or bear the loss. Had they a right to do so? If the chapels were occupied, the expenses might be met; but if not, and there were no power of sale under any circumstances, the trustees might be ruined. He would have them do every thing which they were required to do by Methodism; and then, when the chapels could no longer support themselves, offer them to the Conference on the ground of their being freed from all their liabilities. The above is but a brief abstract of a long and able speech.

Mr. LIVESEY was connected with many chapels, and happened to have a good many Trust Deeds in his possession. Various expedients had been resorted to by Superintendents and Trustees who were friendly to them, to get those Deeds out of his hands; and he had even been threatened; but he still held the Deeds fast. Strong boxes had been provided, and meetings of Trustees had been threatened; but having the majority of the Trustees on his side, all attempts had hitherto been vain. At their last meeting he said, "When you exonerate me from all my liabilities as a Trustee, it will be time enough to talk about giving up the Deeds."

After further conversation on the subject, the meeting adjourned.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6.

On Thursday morning, at six o'clock, Mr. MATTHEWS presented the report of the Finance Committee. It was calculated that the probable expenses, connected with the plan of operations proposed by the Association for the ensuing year, would amount to about 2216*l*, that it would not exceed 2500*l*. He observed, before he concluded his report, that frightful as might be the idea conveyed by the word agitation to the minds of some, the word was innocent enough in itself, and was strictly applicable to all the exertions made by Christians, and even by Jesus Christ himself. Those who at their baptism made a vow to resist the Devil and all his works, did, in effect, pledge themselves to become agitators to the end of their lives.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS suggested the importance of great economy on the part of the lecturers and other agents, as to the mode of their travelling, &c. He had no doubt that when the Delegates returned, they would tell the people what had been done, and what was intended to be done; and he was quite sure the people would willingly contribute what was necessary. There must be travelling preachers in some of the Circuits, partly from the peculiar situation of those Circuits, not having an adequate supply of local preachers, and partly to meet the prejudice of many who preferred the ministrations of travelling to those of local preachers.

A conversation ensued as to the best mode of supplying the Circuits with preachers, and the probable expenses of that supply. The case of the Camelford Circuit was especially named, in which it had been found necessary to employ a preacher, in addition to Mr. Averill and the local preachers. It was suggested that in such cases the preachers might be given to understand, that, in the event of their services not being longer required, they would retire after three months' notice. If Conference should yield to the just demands of the people, it was said, the services of such preachers would not longer be needed. This was objected to by the majority of the meeting; and Mr. GRINDROD especially, said, that if it was supposed by the Manchester people, that there was an intention to desert the preachers who had rendered such aid to the cause, and had made such heavy personal sacrifices, he was quite sure that the members of the Committee would be hooted through the streets.

Mr. VALLANCE, from Hull, was quite astonished that any person should express any doubt as to the willingness or ability of the people to raise the necessary funds. As to Hull, if the proposed sum could not be raised in that place, he would pay the whole himself.

Mr. COOKMAN remarked that the whole sum required for the operations of the Association, for the ensuing year, was little more than was raised for various religious purposes in Hull alone.

Mr. REDSTONE suggested that one halfpenny per week, regularly collected, would meet all the demands. If there were any so poor as not to be able to do that, there were others who could do much more.

It was ultimately decided, that two shillings per year from each member, would meet all the expenses, including the liquidation of the Chancery debt, and most of the Delegates pledged themselves to collect at least that sum. It was stated, that full provision would be made for Dr. Warren at Manchester, for Mr. Averill at Camelford, and for Mr. Lamb at Liverpool.

At nine o'clock, a communication was read from Attercliffe, expressing the wish of the Society there to join the Association.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS stated, that he had lectured at that place on the subject of Methodistical Reform, and had been listened to with deep attention. The people wished to see what Conference would do before they decided; but they had since heard of the expulsion of Dr. Warren, and other circumstances; and, should the Conference refuse to meet the wishes of the Delegates, he believed the Attercliffe people, to a man, would determine on joining the Association.

The consideration of the Chapel Trust question was resumed.

Mr. LOWTHIAN stated the case of the Carlisle Chapels. When Mr. Cox was expelled for the alleged crime of writing a letter to the Manchester Association, the Leaders determined to stand by him; when the Superintendent declared, that, by so doing, they had committed an act of suicide, and they were expelled. The people having promised to stand by them, the next inquiry was, what was to be done with the chapels? The Conference party expressed a willingness to take the chapels, and relieve the Trustees from their liabilities; but the Trustees contended that they had a right in the property, and proposed to divide it. There were two chapels: the Trustees proposed, as theirs was the largest party, to take the larger chapel, and to let the Conference party have the smaller. To that proposition the Conference party would not agree. The Trustees then offered to take the smaller

chapel only; that, also, was refused by the Conference party. Arbitration was proposed, but they said, "No; we will have all." To that the Trustees were resolved not to submit. The result was, that both parties had the chapels. On some occasions, the Conference party held a meeting in one part of the premises, and the liberal party in another. As to preaching, they made use of the chapels whenever they wanted them, and had them well attended. When the Conference party held their services, the attendance was very small. A new captain was likely to be appointed, as Mr. Newton had told them great things should be done for them. But the new preacher must be a man of great courage if he hoped to succeed at Carlisle.

Mr. STEPHENS, of Camelford, said that they had the use of all the chapels in that circuit, with the exception of one. When the Superintendent went to preach in the chapels, the key was generally missing, so that he had to return as he came; or, in cases where the key was given up, he had the mortification to find himself in the chapel alone. Previously to their adopting that course, an offer was made by the trustees to give up all the chapels, if the preacher would free them from their responsibilities. The preacher said he would write to London; but nothing had been heard as to the result. A legal gentleman went and took extracts from the several deeds, and his opinion was that the trustees had forfeited their rights by ceasing to be members of the Society: that being the provision made in several of the deeds. Another gentleman had given it as his decided opinion that no provision of that kind would destroy the legal rights of the trustees. It was not the design of that provision, he said, that no persons should be trustees who were not members of society; because persons were, in some cases, appointed as trustees, who were not members. His belief was, that all the claims of the Conference to the chapel must cease. It was then asked, what would become of the chapels, if Conference should forego their claim: would they become the property of the trustees? He thought that they would in that case revert to the persons to whom they originally belonged. It was desirable that the trustees should have clear information on the subject.

Mr. GORDON remarked that it was very clear that where trusts were in themselves illegal, they could not be enforced. It was certainly illegal that a man should be forced to support the expenses of a place out of his own pocket.

Dr. WARREN said that lawyers themselves were placed in critical circumstances. As to the LEGAL FUND, for instance, there was an article in the rules of that society, that, when a preacher was expelled from the Connexion, he should be excluded from all the benefits of the Institution. But the law of the country would take such a man under its protection, and force the Treasurer of the Institution to pay him his annuity. On that account he had tendered his annual subscription to that fund, in the presence of witnesses, but the Treasurer had refused to accept of it. They offered to return back all the money he had paid in, which he should refuse to all intents and purposes, as that might be construed into a tacit acknowledgment of the legality of his expulsion.

Mr. GORDON said that he had not been expelled; but that it was his full intention to apply for all the money he had paid in.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS said, that much would depend on the provisions of the Act in reference to Benefit Societies. No private rules of any such Society could have influence to alter the law of the land.

It was stated that Lord Tenterden had decided in the case of Mr. Walton, that he had full claims on the fund so long as he paid up his subscription. Recently, Mr. Walton had made application to the magistrates at Leeds, who had determined that his annuity must be paid.

Mr. J. STEPHENS, of London, said, that it was the opinion of Mr. J. Sutcliffe, an eminent solicitor, that any preacher against whom immorality had not been proved, has a full claim upon the funds of the Society; and that he need only make application to a magistrate, and prove that he had paid up his subscription, to have his claim enforced. The case of Mr. Walton was instanced, and also the case of a preacher who had become a Roman Catholic priest, but was still receiving his annuity from the funds of the Society. And it was reasonable that it should be so. Were it otherwise, what might be the result? Whenever the funds were at a low ebb, the preachers would have nothing to do but to trump up cases against some of the claimants, and they would cut off large sources of expenditure at a blow. If the Conference was as corrupt a body as was supposed, it would be very dangerous if there were not some summary mode of relief at hand. All that an expelled preacher had to do, particularly Dr. Warren and Mr. Averill (men who were expelled for no immorality, doctrinal error, or deficiency of ability) was to summons the Treasurer of the Legalised Fund before a magistrate after their first instalment was due, and then the question would at once be decided, and at a little cost, whether the Conference had the power not only to deprive men of their ministerial character and station in the Church, for anything which they chose to call a dereliction from the laws and usages of Methodism "as it is," but also to rob them and their families of the benefits of that Fund.

Dr. WARREN was advised to go on claiming his yearly stipend, and by no means to receive any sum by way of compromise.

Mr. GORDON said, that the preachers had softened the rule as to cutting off ministers from the fund who had been expelled. That they had not done so in mercy to the expelled was certain; it must therefore have been from misgivings that they had no power to do otherwise.

The subject of Chapel Trusts was then resumed.

Mr. CRUICKSHANKS suggested the importance of furnishing the oppressed Trustees with suitable advice. The best way would be to appoint a Committee for the purpose, who should have power to consult the most eminent counsel, and to raise a fund for that purpose. That circumstance would inspire the oppressed with confidence, while it would strike terror into the hearts of their opponents.

Mr. GORDON added some remarks on the case of chapels. Some had said that the Poll Deed was invalid; supposing it to be so, still the property could not revert to the Trustees, nor to the original owners, but to the Government. But it was not likely to go to the Government, so long as public worship was carried on according to the original design; the object being not to aggrandise the Conference, but to take care that the Gospel was preached, and the population benefited. In many

cases, chapels had been transferred to other parties, who carried the original design into effect. There were some cases in which the Deed Poll was invalid, because the deeds of the chapels were framed before that deed was framed. But it was a question how far Mr. Wesley had a right to determine that Conference should do so and so with particular chapels.

Dr. WARREN remarked that the question was, not what was said in the Plan of Pacification, or in any rule Conference might think fit to make; but what was the letter of that particular deed in question. On that deed alone the Court of Chancery would decide.

Mr. SIGSTON strongly recommended the reading of a pamphlet just published, entitled "*The Deed Poll Invalid*." Should that deed be invalid, it would produce the most alarming consequences to the Connexion. The chief argument appeared to be, that any deed must be invalid, which went to annul deeds already existing, and to dispose of property without the consent of the parties concerned.

Mr. GORDON then stated, at some length, the case of two chapels in the Winchester Circuit. Some further explanations were given by Mr. Redstone. Mr. Haynes also stated the case of a chapel at Stourbridge. That, and some other cases, which involved very disgraceful conduct on the part of the preachers and their supporters, were recommended to be referred to a committee. Some remarks were made as to the expenses which would be incurred by Chancery suits; and it was recommended that where the property at stake was but small, and the friends unanimous, it would be better to abandon the property, and set about providing some cheap mode of accommodation for the congregation.

Mr. SHEDDON contended that the chapels ought not to be abandoned. They were built for the public use, and were certainly public property.

Dr. WARREN said that the expenses of suits in Chancery would be ruinous. A most eminent Solicitor had assured him that his expenses would not exceed 500*l.*; but it had cost many times that sum.

Mr. GORDON pledged himself to raise 20*l.* towards Dr. Warren's Chancery debt.

A Committee was ultimately appointed, to whom all cases of Trusts, &c., were to be referred.

It was then determined, that, in the event of the negotiation with the Conference being broken off, an address should be sent forth to the Connexion at large, explanatory of the views and designs of the Association.

Resolutions of thanks were then passed to Dr. Warren, and Messrs. Emmett, Averill, and Gordon, for the part they had taken in the concerns of the Association. It was suggested by one of the speakers that the name of the Association should be merged in some more general name; but Dr. Warren expressed his hope that the name would last for ever. For himself he gloried in his connexion with it. Mr. Parker thought that not only the Wesleyan Connexion, but the whole world were under obligations to the Association, and those reverend gentlemen who had rendered it such services.

Dr. WARREN could say, in the most unaffected manner, that he felt both grateful and sorry at the circumstances under which the meeting had placed him and his brethren. If God had enabled him to aid the cause of Methodist Reform, in the first place, and of religious liberty in the next, he felt himself deeply humbled before God as a feeble instrument. But he was also grateful in being acknowledged by them as such; and it would prove an additional motive to induce him to employ all his powers of body and mind in their service.

Mr. EMMETT could truly say, that, in the whole course of the business in which he had embarked, which he considered as the cause of God and of his dear Redeemer, he had felt that he was engaged in the important struggle from a conscientious principle. Formerly, he had determined to abstain from all interference; but, when he found the Manchester and Liverpool friends coming so nobly forward, he could not decline. He could not remain neutral, for he found that it was the cause of Christ, and that, to be neutral, would be to take part against him. His determination might involve some painful consequences; but come what would, at all hazards, at the hazard of loss of reputation, and health, and personal comfort, and even if it should bring him down to the grave, he would go forward, assured that the testimony of a good conscience would support him under all. He felt the cords of sympathy greatly strengthened by the vote which had been passed, and pledged himself to use all possible exertion, to bring the cause in which he had embarked to a happy issue. He had resolved, in all his endeavours, in the letters he had written, and in the speeches he had made, not to use a disrespectful word against the preachers. He hoped he should do so still. The cause did not require railing accusations. If they would have the people fairly with them, they must adopt Christian practices as well as Christian principles; and by so doing he doubted not that they should bring their operations to a happy and blessed result.

Mr. GORDON assured the meeting, that he needed no thanks; what he had done, he had done from principle. When the Manchester Association first issued its plan, he differed from them; he thought that what they proposed, did not go to the root of the evil. But he had acted on principles to which he still adhered. Some of his former friends had accused him of turning round; it was said, that his present views of Methodism, differed from those which he formerly entertained. That he denied: at the time of the Leeds business, his opinion was fully formed; but, at the suggestion of a judicious friend, he had abstained from coming forward to declare his sentiments publicly. He had, however, never shrunk from plainly stating his convictions. He constantly examined the proceedings of Conference, to ascertain how far he could remain in the Body without doing violence to the dictates of his conscience; and, as soon as he found that what Conference did affected him,—affected his rights and his conscience—as soon as submissions were required of him, which he thought contrary to duty, his conduct was determined, and he resigned his connexion with the Conference. He returned the meeting hearty thanks for their expression of good will, and hoped that he should continue to base his conduct upon just principles.

Mr. AVERILL followed. He felt his mind considerably relieved and encouraged by the expression of kindness which had just been given. He had long been a Methodist Reformer. He soon discovered that there was need for Reform; that there was a drag on the system which prevented it from working as it ought. The exercise of irresponsible power in the Leeds case had made a strong

and deep impression upon his mind, and he began to suspect that all was not right. In the Derby case, also, he saw that excellent and holy men were cast out, merely for aiding the cause of God, and for endeavouring to promote revivals of religion. In reference to the case of the Camelford circuit, when he found the Superintendent trampling under foot the rights of the people, and acting in opposition to God's holy word, he saw it to be his duty to come forward and to oppose, to the best of his ability, those acts of irresponsible and illegal power. The way in which Methodism had been administered there, had been most unnatural: it was as if a mother should cast away her children, and refuse to take any further notice of them. For thus advocating the rights of the people, and defending Methodism as it was in the olden times, he was suspended. But he had been divinely supported; and, amidst all his difficulties, was able to say:—

“Calm on tumult's wheel I sit,
'Midst busy multitudes alone;
Sweetly waiting at thy feet,
Till all thy will be done.”

The day of his expulsion from the Wesleyan Conference, he regarded as ranking among the happiest days of his life. He was so conscious of having done his duty, that he had no one reproach upon his mind. He felt assured that he had acted on Scriptural principles; that he was happy in his mind—happy in his God. And so he felt at present, determined still to advocate the same great cause—the cause of religious liberty.

It having been moved that Dr. WARREN, and Messrs. AVERILL and LAMB, be requested still to promote the objects of the Association,

Dr. WARREN wished to know the exact position in which the resolution would place him. Would it require unlimited services to the whole Association? If so, he must not lose sight of his intimate relation to the great and important Society at Manchester. He should find it difficult to go over a large portion of the country, and yet discharge his duty to that Society. If he was to be, in the largest sense of the word, a travelling preacher in England, Ireland, and Scotland, then, how should he stand in reference to the Manchester Circuit? As the friends there had pledged themselves to take care of him, he ought, certainly, to take care of them. But, if it only meant that he should pay due attention to Manchester, and occasionally devote some time to the business of the Association, as did Mr. Hughes, for instance, and others, then he should know how to act.

Mr. AVERILL proposed a similar question in consequence of his engagements with the people in the Camelford Circuit.

Some conversation ensued, the result of which was an understanding that Dr. Warren was to devote his chief attention to Manchester, Mr. Averill to Camelford, and Mr. Lamb to Liverpool. A preacher was also likely to be appointed to Carlisle. Any time that could be spared for the promotion of the general objects of the Association was to be devoted, according as arrangements could be made agreeable to all parties.

Messrs. Emmett and Gordon were also requested to render their aid to the Association. Mr. Gordon explained, that his views on the question of continuing the agitation probably differed from those of many present; but he contented himself with urging upon all the agents the vast importance of paying particular attention to the spiritual welfare of the Societies.

At a quarter past twelve o'clock, two messengers arrived from the President of the Conference, requesting to know how long the present sitting was likely to continue. The document to be sent by the President, had occupied more time in transcribing than was expected, in consequence of which it would not be sent till nearly one o'clock. The answer returned was that the Delegates would continue sitting till one o'clock.

A resolution was then proposed, recommending the Conference to have its sittings, as well as those of the District Meetings, open to the public.

Mr. TAYLOR had long been convinced of the necessity of such a measure. Though no improper business might ever be transacted, yet the very circumstance that all was done within closed doors, with sentinels, was calculated to excite suspicion.

Mr. ROWLAND supported the resolution. He was once an advocate for secret meetings; but he was now convinced, as he had told Mr. Jackson, that it was the system of secrecy, which had been enforced and observed in all their proceedings, that had encouraged the preachers to go to the lengths to which they had proceeded. Had the meetings of leaders, &c., been less secret, during the last nine months, the work of Methodist Reform would have been greatly facilitated.

The following communication was then received from the Conference:—

TO MR. GEORGE COOKMAN.

Carver-street, Sheffield, Aug. 6, 1835.

Sir,—The “Address to the Methodist Conference assembled in Sheffield,” dated August 1, 1835, professing to proceed “from a numerous meeting of Wesleyan Delegates,” and signed “George Cookman, Chairman, Ralph Grindrod, Secretary,” has been read to the Conference, who have directed me, as their President, to return the following answer:—

1. It is with the greatest surprise that the Conference have listened to a statement in the Address, that the persons described are “Wesleyan Delegates,” and are “commissioned by a vast number, comprising tens of thousands of members of the Societies.” This surprise is founded on the *fact*, that no information has yet reached the Conference from any quarter, to justify the belief that any considerable number of our Societies have either wished for, or concurred in, the appointment of delegates to any such meeting; indeed, not a single Circuit, or Society, nor even any one *collective body of trustees*, in the whole Kingdom, has announced to the Conference its mission of any individual or individuals, for purposes so irregular and unconstitutional; so that the delegation or commission, if it have really taken place to any thing like the extent asserted in the Address, which is a matter quite unproved, must at all events be allowed to have been accomplished by means the reverse of those which are fair, open, and manly, and to come before the Conference and the Connexion in a singularly unauthenticated and equivocal character.

2. But, even if this weighty objection to the statement of the “Address” as to “Wesleyan Delegates”

could be removed, there is another which the Conference considers to be altogether insurmountable. It is founded on the broad and obvious *principle* of Methodism, and indeed of Society in general, whether civil or religious, that such a plan of *confederated* delegations as that to which this address appears to refer, designed to interrupt, or supersede, or intimidate the regular jurisdictions of our community, is calculated to subvert the purposes of agitation and faction, but can never consist with the maintenance of Christian order, edification, and peace.

3. The Conference are constrained, on a calm review of various circumstances, to entertain the conviction, that the meeting from which the address has emanated, instead of being, as it is delusively termed, a meeting of Wesleyan Delegates, is in reality an adjourned meeting of "The Grand body of persons calling themselves the Central Association," of which a provisional meeting was held in Manchester in the month of April last. This conviction is confirmed by the notorious facts, that the Manchester meeting, in April, formally resolved and agreed, that an adjourned meeting of delegates connected with it should be procured, and assembled in Sheffield, at this very period; and that of the placards and other advertisements, published on this occasion, some expressly speak of an "adjourned meeting" of the said Association, and others, though professing to call an "adjourned meeting of Wesleyan Delegates," are as expressly stated to have been issued by "The Central Committee of the Association." The last-mentioned advertisements were signed by "William Smith," and "William Wood," the Chairman and Secretary of the Association's Committee; and the very address now under consideration, bears the signatures of the Chairman and Secretary of the Provisional Meeting of the Association, held in Manchester. It is therefore clear to the Conference that this address is, in truth, a communication, however disguised, from the "Grand Central Association" itself, or from persons who, by attending its meetings, and other unequivocal tokens of sympathy and encouragement, are virtually identified with, and responsible for, the projects and proceedings of that Association.

4. Taking this view of the origin and character of the present address, the Conference deems it due, in Christian simplicity and candour, to announce at once its deliberate and unalterable resolution, not to hold any intercourse with the said "Grand Central Association," or with any other meeting, howsoever denominated, into which persons who continue to be leading and active members of that confederacy, shall be notoriously admitted, and receive approbation and sanction. That Association was avowedly formed on the principles which we deem to be subversive of essential constitution of Wesleyan Methodism. It has in the meeting at Manchester, and elsewhere, openly fraternised with various persons belonging to parties, who have for a number of years ceased to have any connexion with our Body, and are distinguished by the violence and injustice of their attacks on its members and its system. It has adopted a regular scheme and course of "agitation," in disgraceful imitation of certain political proceedings, tending, by public meetings, and other means of disturbance, to the ultimate division of our Societies, and to the great annoyance and discomfort of those of our flocks who are desirous to live in peace and godly quietness. It has most wickedly, though, happily, with little effect, endeavoured to injure the public funds of the Connexion, and, by persuading those who hearkened to its counsels to "stop the supplies," has placed itself in practical hostility to those great institutions of piety and mercy, both at home and abroad, to the promotion of which the funds in question are devoted. It has, by various publications, attacked, in the most unmeasured and bitter language, that system which alone can, with any truth or honesty, be designated as *Wesleyan Methodism*, and advocated the substitution for it of other, and widely different plans of ecclesiastical government and discipline, plans which are subversive of the scriptural rights of the Christian ministry, and inconsistent with the pure and faithful discharge of the functions of the pastoral office; plans which, therefore, *are not Wesleyan Methodism*, and which it can only serve the purposes of delusion or self-deception, to miscall by that honoured name. It has, both in mixed meetings and by means of the press, carried on and encouraged a regular course of slander and calumny, directed against the Conference and its members, in reckless violation of the requirements of truth, of piety, of brotherly kindness, and even of common decency itself; and is identified with a system of periodical vituperation and abuse, such as never before assailed a body of Christian ministers and pastors, on the part of persons still strangely professing, for the most part, to desire religious communion with the very men whom they habitually revile and hold up to public reprobation and scorn. With such an Association, or with any meeting of persons who are directly or indirectly in fellowship with it, or who shall persevere, after due admonition and expostulation, in aiding or abetting its revolutionary and unhallowed projects, the Conference could not hold communication, without violating their duty to God, their fidelity to the great trust and deposit of genuine Methodism committed specially to their care, their pastoral obligations to the immense and overwhelming majority of their beloved Societies, both at home and in foreign lands, by whom the divisive and disorderly principles of the Association are held in just abhorrence, and the proper regard which they owe to their own ministerial honour and character, so foully aspersed by the leading actors in the present scheme of organised disturbance and agitation.

5. While the Conference, in the fear of God, thus announce their firm resolution on this subject, and are persuaded that it will have the cordial approbation of the great mass of our Societies, and especially of those whose standing, piety, intelligence, and active support of Methodism, best entitle their opinions on such topics to respectful consideration, they feel it also due to their beloved flocks in general, to those among the dissatisfied portion of their Societies whom they willingly consider rather as the deluded and misled, than as the deluders and misleaders of the party, and to their own sincere and long-cherished sentiments of what is right and fitting, to make the following declaration, viz.:—That it is their intention to take into their most affectionate and careful consideration, partly at this Conference, as far as time can be found for such a task, when the *indispensable* business of their Session shall have been transacted, and partly at the earliest subsequent opportunity, some of the most material of those subjects of discipline which have of late excited the attention of the Connexion. They will engage in this work, not with the purpose of making any one of those revolutionary changes which the Association has demanded, or of abandoning any one of those vital and important principles of pastoral administration, which are embodied in Wesleyan Methodism as now generally understood and exercised among us, but in order to carry out the principles already recognised into yet more extensive and satisfactory operation, especially in relation to the financial affairs of the Connexion, and to provide, if possible, *additional guards and securities* for our people, in reference to the calm and temperate exercise of those scriptural powers which belong, of right, to the pastoral office, and are essential to the faithful discharge of its salutary and divinely-appointed functions.

6. The Conference is also most happy to take this opportunity of declaring, that, while decidedly opposed to the recognition of any divisive and agitating association or confederacy whatsoever, they are at all times ready to receive, with the most respectful attention, the friendly communications and suggestions of any member of their Societies, if unconnected with the "Grand Central Association," or any such mischievous combination, on topics tending not to the subversion, but to the conservation of our doctrines and discipline, and of the great and vital interests of the Connexion. They are willing to appoint proper persons, members of their Body, to converse freely and kindly with any such persons who may request it, in order to afford such friendly explanations and pastoral counsel, as they may need in the present crisis;

and if any parties, supposing themselves aggrieved or injured by certain acts of local discipline, which have occurred during the last year, be disposed to forward their complaints to the Conference, in a peaceful and Christian spirit, and will promise to refrain, in the mean time, from all hostile proceedings, provision shall be made, as far as possible, to meet such cases, by special deputations from the Conference to the Circuits concerned, which deputations, in conjunction with the District Committee, shall be charged to enter upon a fair and impartial revision of those transactions, and to do justice to all parties, on the basis of those long tried and scriptural principles, which the laws and usages of Methodism have ever recognised, and from which the Conference, by the blessing of God, ARE RESOLVED NEVER TO DEPART.

Signed on behalf, and by order of the Conference,

RICHARD REECE, President.

The document was listened to with deep attention, and the meeting immediately adjourned.

At three o'clock, the communication was again read.

Some of the Delegates seemed anxious to express their sentiments in reference to it, but it was suggested that the best way would be to pass it by at once as unsatisfactory. This opinion prevailed, and a resolution was carried to the effect that a communication had been received from the Conference, but that such was its nature, as to induce the meeting to express their belief that all hope of an amicable adjustment with the present Conference was at an end, and that the Association should immediately commence its proposed operations.

Preparations were immediately made for holding a public meeting in Sheffield that evening. In the course of a very short time a proof was exhibited of an immense placard announcing that a public meeting that evening would be held in the South-street chapel, and that the Rev. Dr. Warren, the Rev. R. Emmett, and the Rev. J. Averill, would give an account of their expulsion from the Wesleyan body.

Arrangements were also made for a second meeting to be held on Friday evening. Also, for meetings at Leeds, Rotherham, and Doncaster, at the earliest convenient opportunity.

Mr. ROWLAND said that they were now brought to the crisis they had been anticipating, and against which they had been seriously, diligently, and prayerfully applying themselves. Allusions had frequently been made to the deep and intense anxiety which must at that moment be pervading the immense body of the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion. The anxieties of that Connexion were directed to the town of Sheffield. No doubt the knowledge of that disastrous affair would spread through the kingdom with the rapidity of lightning, filling the minds of those who heard it with terror and dismay. One result of that frightful state of things would be the following:—that, in addition to all the statements which had been made, in addition to so many persons called from all parts of the kingdom, at a great pecuniary sacrifice, and at a loss of much time from other important concerns; a number of inquiries would be made as to the circumstances which could justify such proceedings, and as to the real nature of the evils, of which those letters, and the persons so assembled complained. A mass of documents had been presented to the meeting which had filled with astonishment the minds of all who felt any anxiety as to the state of the Connexion at the present moment. It had been a question with him, whether they ought not, at the very first, to have put Conference in possession of information as to the actual state of the Connexion. It would seem from one paragraph in the document last received from the Conference, that a large portion of that respectable body were in a state of positive ignorance as to the real condition of the Connexion. He did think that it was the duty of the Delegates, as an act of self-vindication—of mercy to the Conference—of good to the Connexion at large, to make them acquainted with the solemn fact. That opinion, however, had been overruled, and he had bowed to the opinion of his friends. But he did think it was now necessary that a portion, at least, of those important documents should be published. He thought that the most interesting matter might be selected, and that the Connexion should immediately be put in possession of the information which had been communicated to the meeting.

It was suggested that the names of the individuals should be omitted, as they might otherwise be marked out as objects for persecution.

Mr. BEYNON did not think that they were bound to furnish the Conference with such intelligence. If they were ignorant, which he much doubted, their ignorance was wilful. It was impossible that they could be ignorant of the fact that thousands and tens of thousands had sent the Delegates to Sheffield. If they had not found that out, he was sure that they would find it out very soon.

Mr. SISSISON, Mr. CRUICKSHANKS, Mr. THOMPSON, and others, supported the motion for a publication of such extracts.

A letter was read which had just been received from Burslem, approving of the measures of the Association, as based on principles which could not fail to ensure the Divine blessing. They pledged themselves to stand by their Delegate, and to protect him from any consequences which might result from his interference. It was signed by seven official characters, and it was stated that numerous signatures might have been obtained, but that the time had not allowed.

Mr. LIVESZY said, that as to giving information to the preachers, it was a matter of no consequence. They were deluded and blinded, and would not believe the statement. But the publication proposed might have its use among some of them, and it would tend to vindicate the course which the Delegates might hereafter pursue. It would be well to state the numbers, so far as they could be ascertained, both of official men and of private individuals, who were ready to support the noble cause.

Mr. HANCOCK, from the Potteries, said, that during the last winter and spring, there had been chafings of mind, and many serious consultations, among the friends in the Potteries. Many had taken the liberal side of things, and had supported the principles of truth and righteousness with Christian temper. The party on the other side had exerted themselves also, and the result was, that two declarations were got up, one for Methodism as it is, the other for a reform in Methodism. The letter which had just been read stated things, he was convinced, below the real mark. Had there

been more time, many would gladly have subscribed their names; but he had no doubt of their most cordial co-operation.

A Committee was appointed to draw up the extracts, &c., for speedy publication.

A resolution of thanks was proposed to the editors of the *Watchman's Lantern*.

Mr. BARNES thought that publication had fully answered its end. He had never met with one article in it which betrayed the least degree of improper feeling.

Dr. WARREN thought that the publication in question had done the cause great credit, both on the right hand and on the left. Notwithstanding all provocations, amidst the brutal attacks of their opponents, its conductors had never lost their temper. He was thankful for the able and Christian manner in which they had conducted their gratuitous services.

Mr. BEYNON was convinced that the *Lantern* had greatly aided the cause of reform. It had been the means of spreading information to a very wide extent. The Delegates would do well to render it all possible service, by assisting to circulate the stock which yet remained.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. GRINDROD then proposed a resolution of thanks to the conductors of the *Christian Advocate* newspaper, for the very able and efficient manner in which they had promoted the principles of Methodistical Reform. The *Christian Advocate* was a publication to which they were very deeply indebted; and it became them thus publicly to acknowledge their obligations, and to pledge themselves anew to its support in every possible way.

Mr. SISSISON seconded the resolution most cordially. He was convinced, that, if it had not been for the *Christian Advocate*, the cause of reform would not have been in its present circumstances. The resolution referred to the conductors of that paper. Being himself related to the principal editor, he felt great pleasure in thus expressing his sentiments. The revered and excellent father of that gentleman had been for many years a travelling preacher, and was the distinguished friend of Dr. Bunting; and it was the decided opinion of that editor, that, if his highly respected father had been still living, so great was his influence with Dr. Bunting, that he would scarcely have pursued the measures on which he now seemed so obstinately bent.

Mr. LIVESSEY thought very highly of the *Christian Advocate*, and had strongly recommended and defended it. He thought highly of it as advocating the cause of Methodistical Reform; but he also approved of its politics. In that respect he considered it as correct, if not more so, as any contemporary publication. It was true that its politics were Liberal; but they were also enlightened and judicious. In both respects he felt himself bound to give it the highest recommendation.

Dr. WARREN admired the able and uncompromising manner in which the *Christian Advocate* had supported its principles. He admired, also, its disinterestedness. He had seen, that, in some cases where individuals who appeared to be on the side of the *Advocate*, and its warm friends, had departed, even for a moment, from what the editors conceived to be the right line, they had not failed to tell those individuals, boldly and fearlessly, what they thought of them, even at the hazard of losing those persons' friendship. Nor did he know of any paper that was conducted with more literary ability. At the same time, its correspondence was most invaluable. Regarding the *Christian Advocate* as one of the greatest bulwarks of the principles of the Association, and also as one of the greatest sources of terror to their opponents, he most cordially supported the resolution and only lamented that he could not render that substantial support to the paper which was adequate to his wishes.

Mr. PARKER supported the resolution. He begged to express his sentiments as to that valuable paper. He had done so at Manchester; and was most anxious to promote its welfare in every possible way.

The resolution was then carried unanimously.

A resolution of thanks to the friends at Sheffield, by whom the Delegates had been kindly entertained, was then carried unanimously.

Mr. LIVESSEY rose to express his high gratification with the present meeting, both at the intelligence which had been communicated to it, and at the Christian feeling which had been throughout displayed. That tone of feeling warranted a hope of success. The stones of their building had all been laid in love, and love was a uniting principle. However good their plans, if they had not love, they could not greatly prosper: let love prevail, and their labours would be blessed. They were now going forth to their respective circuits, and he believed that the effects which would be produced on their return, would be such as to astonish one part of the Society, and awfully appal the other. From the centre to the circumference, there seemed to be but one spirit, and he believed that they would go forth, notwithstanding all the ignominy and contempt with which they might be loaded, "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." To his vision it appeared as though Satan was falling like lightning to the earth; and their cause would, it must, it should prevail. He was ready from the first, as far as he was concerned, to immolate himself on the altar of their cause: he still felt willing to do so; and, in reference to all present, he most sincerely wished that the best blessings might attend them.

Mr. THOMPSON had come to the meeting with deep and anxious feelings; but he had come in the fear of God. It was the honest sentiment of his mind, that there had been as much good and Christian temper and forbearance, as had ever prevailed in any public assembly. He should go forth to proclaim such sentiments as far as his influence reached. They had but few friends comparatively in Sunderland at present, but those few, if known, would be regarded by the Delegates as the pride and ornament of any Christian society. When they saw what had been done, and how Conference had treated them, he was sure they would be roused to exertion. In some sense he had been disappointed, for he could not have calculated on being met with so much insolence on the part of the Conference; but he believed that the course the Conference had pursued, would ultimately do good.

Mr. HAY, from Carrickfergus, expressed himself to the same effect.

Mr. JOHNSTONE wished to express the unbounded gratitude he felt, while he recollected the spirit in which they separated at their last meeting; and his most lively satisfaction at what he had witnessed on the present occasion. He should endeavour to convey to Preston some of the feelings which he himself entertained.

A resolution of thanks to the Trustees of Surrey-street Chapel, for the use of the chapel, was carried unanimously.

A resolution of thanks to G. Cookman, Esq., the Chairman, was then proposed by Mr. Livesey, seconded by Mr. Sigston, and supported by Mr. Parker; who all testified their deep sense of the obligations under which the meeting was laid by the ability with which the Chairman had discharged his onerous duty. It was carried with acclamations.

Mr. COOKMAN, in returning thanks, said that he was under great obligations to his highly esteemed friends for the regard which they had just manifested towards him. Deeply as he felt his responsibility, and his inability rightly to discharge his duty, he had been greatly borne up by the kindness of his friends. The honour which they had conferred upon him was greater than he had deserved; but he felt a lively interest in all that concerned the promotion of civil and religious liberty. He felt deeply anxious, also, to promote all that was connected with the cause of Wesleyan Methodism. He had been in that Society about forty years: he had acted as Class Leader, as Local Preacher, and had filled various offices, all with the one great object of advancing the glory of God, and the glory of his fellow-men. He had not been expelled, but had been compelled to withdraw. He never had one charge, either directly or indirectly, brought against his moral character. Nay, more; though he differed on some points from many of his friends in the Circuit, he had never had any angry feeling, nor did he know that he had uttered one unkind word. And he did humbly trust, notwithstanding the separation which had taken place, that he should hold on his course with joy. He then said that he should feel a deep interest in promoting the objects of the Association. He confessed that he could not have believed that any company of men could have received the treatment which they had received from the Conference. But it would be well for them still to entertain the most friendly feelings, and by courteous demeanour to put to silence all that might be said of them and of their cause, and at least convince their opponents that they were Christians.

Resolutions of thanks were next proposed to Messrs. Grindrod and Wood, the Secretaries of the Association. Their duties, it was said, had been arduous, and had been well discharged.

Dr. WARREN said that he supported the resolution from his deep and thorough knowledge of the admirable manner in which the Secretaries had discharged the duties of their office, in addition to all the arduous duties of their professions. The same kind Providence which had supported so many others in that great cause, had graciously supported them.

Mr. GRINDROD briefly returned thanks, and pledged himself to new efforts to promote the objects of the Association. Dr. WARREN concluded the meeting with prayer.

OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

ADJOURNED MEETING OF WESLEYAN DELEGATES.

At a MEETING of WESLEYAN DELEGATES from various Circuits and places in the Kingdom, held at Sheffield, July 31st, 1835, and continued, by adjourned sittings, until August 6th, 1835, assembled for the purpose of negotiating with Conference upon some efficient remedy for existing abuses in Wesleyan Methodism;

GEORGE COOKMAN, Esq., of Hull, in the Chair;

And present,—from

<i>Appleby</i>	John Dent.	<i>Hexham</i>	Nevis Loraine*	<i>Northwich</i>	James Edwards
<i>Bury</i>	James Livsey.	<i>Isle of Man</i> ..	John Cain*		Wm. Wallace
<i>Birmingham</i> ..	Thos. Hickling	<i>Keighley</i>	Jos. Blythman	<i>Newcastle</i>	W. A. Whinfield
	Joseph Wilks	<i>Liverpool,</i>	Richard Farrer	<i>New Mills</i>	Wm. Stafford
<i>Barnard Castle</i>	George Benson	<i>North</i>	David Rowland		John Beard
	M. Braithwaite		Anthony Barnes	<i>Nottingham</i> ..	M. Miller
<i>Burslem</i>	Thos. Hancock	<i>South</i>	Wm. Johnson	<i>Nantwich</i>	John Smith
<i>Burnley</i>	Thomas Farrer		John Beynon		Rich. Horton
	John Nuttall		John Wood, Sec.	<i>Paterington</i> ..	R. Braimbridge
<i>Bradford Yorksh.</i>	John Wade		J. Clark, Agent.	<i>Preston</i>	John Johnstone
	Henry Crosley	<i>London</i>	J. Nettleton*		Joseph Pomfrit
<i>Barnsley</i>	James Eger	<i>Leeds</i>	James Sigston	<i>Rochdale</i>	Geo. Ashworth*
	John Taylor		Matt. Johnson		John Petre*
<i>Bodmin</i>	William Hicks		W. Cruickshanks	<i>Skipton</i>	John Lockwood
<i>Bilston</i>	Robert Bew*	<i>Louth</i>	William Brown		Thomas Wilson
<i>Camelford</i>	John Averill	<i>Lynn</i>	Geo. Franklin	<i>Sheffield</i>	George Turton
	Matt. Stephens	<i>Lane End</i>	James Grossett		Geo. Rawlins
<i>Carrickfergus</i> ..	Samuel Hay	<i>Macclesfield</i> ..	Rich. Marsden		Wm. Hoole*
<i>Carlisle</i>	William Dawson		W. T. Hesketh	<i>Stockport</i>	Wm. Smith
	John Lowthian		Thomas Taylor	<i>Sunderland</i> ..	John Thompson
<i>Clitheroe</i>	Thomas Fielding		Joseph Peak	<i>Sittingbourne</i> ..	James Barnerd
	Henry Robinson	<i>1st Circuit</i> ..	Robert Lowe	<i>Stourbridge</i> ..	Wm. Haynes
<i>Darlington</i>	Charles Parker		John Haywood		John Blurton
	George Spencer		J. Brook, Agent.	<i>Todmorden</i> ..	J. Fielden
<i>Dereham</i>	Henry Balls		R. B. Grindrod,		Wm. Thompson
<i>Dudley</i>	John Gordon		Secretary.	<i>Worksop</i>	Robert Carr
	William Sheddou	<i>2d Circuit</i> ..	Wm. Matthews		George Stacey
<i>Glasgow</i>	Wm. Cochrane		Thomas Barlow	<i>Winchester</i> ...	Wm. Redstone
<i>Glossop</i>	James Hall		George Hughes	<i>Worcester</i>	George Miller
	Thomas Besho	<i>3d Circuit</i> ..	John Greenhalgh	<i>Wrexham</i>	Thos. Hughes
<i>Hull</i>	George Cookman		Jabez Sanderson	<i>Whitehaven</i> ..	D. Douglas
	Wm. Sissison	<i>4th Circuit</i> ..	John Hart		John Fisher
	J. H. Vallance*		Thomas Lucas	<i>Yarm</i>	Robert Emmett
	Rich. Knight*				

(Those marked *, were not delegated officially.)

N.B. Letters from Circuits which could not send Delegates, were received from the following places:—

Brighton	Ipswich	South Shields	Wallsend
Bristol	Northampton	Sandbeach	Warrington
Carville	Newark-on-Trent	Stafford.	Whitby
Castleton, Isle of Man	Poole, Dorset	St. Austell	Warminster
Durham	Rugby	Sheerness	Wotton-Bridge, Isle of
Edinburgh	Redruth	Tavistock	Wight.
Helston	Ramsay, Isle of Man		

It having been considered that it was most desirable to communicate with Conference as early as possible, on the nature of the business which had called the Delegates together, it was

RESOLVED,

That an Address be drawn up for presentation to Conference, and that, in the mean time, a note † be forwarded to the President of the Conference.

A great number of letters and addresses from various Circuits having been read, exhibiting the diffusion of the principles of Methodistical Reform, containing complaints of many serious grievances, arising from the arbitrary exercise of irresponsible power on the part of Methodist Preachers, and pointing out what were conceived to be appropriate remedies for the evils of which they complained, it was

Resolved,—That the Secretaries of this Meeting be instructed to compile, for early publication, abstracts from the mass of correspondence, on the present state of the Circuits, which has been laid before this meeting.

† For the whole of the foregoing report, and the correspondence between the Delegates and the Conference, referred to in this advertisement, see the *Christian Advocate* newspaper, Aug. 10.

A note having been received from the President of the Conference, and some conversation having ensued as to the propriety of a further communication with him, urging the necessity of an early reply to the application of the preceding day, it was

Resolved,—That a reply be returned to the President.

An answer to the reply of the Delegates having been received from the President, intimating that any communication intended for the Conference should be sent to him, and that he would lay the same before his brethren, for their instructions thereupon, it was

Resolved,—That the following Address having been adopted by the Meeting, be forthwith conveyed to the Conference:—

AN ADDRESS TO THE METHODIST CONFERENCE ASSEMBLED IN SHEFFIELD, FROM A NUMEROUS MEETING OF WESLEYAN DELEGATES.

Dear Brethren,—The serious and alarming disturbance which at present prevails throughout a considerable part of the Wesleyan Connexion, forms a reason sufficient to justify the unusual application which we thus make to you.

We deplore the evils of disunion and division which have already accompanied that disturbance, and anticipate with the most painful feelings still greater evils as likely to occur, unless efficient measures be immediately adopted to arrest the progress of disorganisation.

We feel ourselves united to the system of Methodism by the strong tie of grateful affection. Many of us have been connected with it from our earliest years. Ye are our witnesses, that we have cheerfully, according to our ability, in our several spheres, endeavoured to diffuse its influence and promote its objects; and, in so doing, have incurred heavy pecuniary responsibilities. In its communion we still wish to labour, to live and to die; and our heart's desire and prayer to God is, that Methodism, strictly conformed to the principles contained in his holy word, may bless our children and children's children, to the end of time.

We might on these and on other grounds assert a personal claim to the attention we solicit; but, when we inform you that we have been commissioned to hold communication with you by a vast number, comprising tens of thousands of members of the societies over which you have been placed, we feel assured that you will give the most serious regard to our requests.

Brethren, it is union for which we are contending, and not division, union on a solid and Scriptural foundation; and we confidently hope that you will co-operate with us in stilling the agitation which is so injurious to the character, and destructive to the success, of our community. In the fear of the Lord, we submit to you our wishes. It is with you to pour oil on the troubled waters. You have the power to prolong and increase the discord and strife now so unhappily prevailing among us; and you have also the power, under God, to render our Connexion prosperous and happy.

Permit us to state—and the statement is made not in anger but in sorrow—that, in our opinion, the cause of the grievances of which complaint is at present so loudly and generally made, is the assumption on your part of an authority, which, both as to its nature and extent, is inconsistent with the Brotherly relation which ought to subsist among us. It is on this account that we so anxiously look to you for the removal of those grievances. We request you to allow us personally to communicate with you on this subject, either by admitting us into your Conference, or by appointing some of your number who may meet with us, or in any other equitable mode which may be more convenient to you.

We are prepared respectfully and affectionately to receive any suggestions toward the establishment of peace which you may deem proper to make to us in the course of such communication, as we are also ready clearly and fully to state what we believe will most conduce to the welfare of Methodism at the present crisis.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

Surrey-street, Sheffield, Aug. 1, 1835.

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.

Resolved,—That the Address of the Delegates having, at the intimation of the Conference, been presented to the President, the Meeting now deem it necessary, to settle, and finally determine, the grounds upon which they are disposed to treat with the Conference, in order to an amicable adjustment of the unhappy differences which at present exist in the Connexion.

As the Meeting of Delegates at Manchester claimed the right of interference of the members of the church, in the regulation of all its affairs; and as it appears to this meeting that such claim is sanctioned by the New Testament, and agreeable to the practice of the primitive church, and calculated also to secure and perpetuate the religious rights and privileges of the people, it is

Resolved, 1st,—That any negotiation into which the Delegates may enter with the Conference shall proceed on the basis of the right of the members of the church, to take part with the preachers in Conference in making laws and regulations for the government of the Connexion, and shall be distinctly and unequivocally avowed and demanded as the foundation of future arrangements.

2 That, if it should appear to the Deputation which may be appointed to treat with the Conference, that there exists at the present any insuperable difficulty to the admission of lay representatives into the Conference, then the following outline of a plan for the government of the societies,—with such additions in perfect accordance with its principles as may be mutually agreed upon between the two deputations,—shall be submitted to the Conference and the Delegates.

(1.) That no official person be censured, suspended, or expelled from office, without the consent of a majority of the Meeting of which he is a member; and that no member shall be expelled the Society, without the consent of a majority of the Leaders' Meeting. An appeal to lie from the Local Preachers' and the Leaders' Meetings to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting. The decision of this Meeting to be final.

(2.) That all official meetings have the unfettered right of addressing Conference on any subject which they think affects the interests of the Society, Circuit, or Connexion. That no Superintendent, as Chairman *ex-officio*, shall be allowed to prohibit any official meeting from passing resolutions expressive of its sentiments, for the purpose of conveying such sentiments to the Conference; and that, if any Superintendent should refuse to put to the vote any resolutions regularly proposed for the before-mentioned purpose, then the Meeting shall have authority to appoint another person to be for that time the Chairman of the Meeting.

(3.) That the nomination to all offices in Local Meetings be vested in the preachers and officers of such meetings conjointly.

(4.) That, before the Conference pass any new rule or regulation affecting the societies, the opinion of the people, through the Quarterly Meetings in the preceding year, shall be taken thereon; and, unless a majority of the members, as represented by such meetings, agree to such proposed rule or regulation, it shall not become the law of the Connexion.

(5.) That the financial affairs of the Connexion be managed as much as possible by laymen, and that the laymen upon our various committees be chosen by the people.

(6.) That the Conference, and all other Methodist meetings, shall confine their business to subjects which are strictly and distinctively religious.

(7.) That, as there are many members of Society sincerely attached to Methodism, who most decidedly object to the establishment of the Theological Institution, and who, from the opinions they entertain thereon, conceive that the character of our ministry will thereby be injuriously altered, and the pecuniary resources of the Connexion diminished; and as it is obvious, from the past prosperity of Methodism without such an Institution, that it is not indispensable, therefore the Conference should consent, rather than hazard a division of the Connexion, that that subject should be laid before the respective Quarterly Meetings; and, if disapproved of by the majority, the Institution be forthwith abandoned.

(8.) That all District Meetings and Conferences be open to the Members of our Society, on some convenient plan, to be mutually agreed upon between the two parties.

Resolved, 3d,—That, in the event of the Conference adopting the propositions submitted by this Meeting as the foundation of a friendly adjustment, the Delegates will require, previous to the completion of the proposed arrangement between the Conference and the people, that the Rev. Dr. Warren, and any other preacher who may have incurred the displeasure of the Conference, or of any District Meeting, on matters connected with the present disturbance in the Connexion, shall be restored to his work in the ministry; and that every official person, or private member, who has been expelled from office, or membership, since the Conference of 1827, for any act arising out of the various causes of dissatisfaction prevailing in the Societies; or who, from the same cause, may have withdrawn from the Society, shall, unless proved guilty by a majority of a Leaders' Meeting, of some subsequent act of immorality, be reinstated in the situation he held, previous to his expulsion, or withdrawal.

A communication from the President having been received, assigning certain reasons for the delay of the Conference in reference to a final answer to the application of the Delegates,

It was Resolved,—That a note be returned, urging upon the Conference the absolute necessity, under all the circumstances of the case, of an immediate reply being granted to the request contained in the Address.

The President of Conference having sent a further communication, stating that he "had already taken measures for bringing the subject of the Address, which bears the signatures of Mr. Cookman and Mr. Grindrod, before the Conference, at the earliest opportunity; and hoped that it might be in his power to return an answer to their application, on, or before, the following Thursday morning at twelve o'clock."

After considerable discussion as to the character and intention of the above communication, and upon a review of the whole of the previous correspondence between the meeting and the Conference,

It was Resolved,—That another letter, complaining of the delay of Conference, and again inquiring, whether or not their request for a personal interview would be acceded to, be forthwith transmitted to the President.

The Rev. Dr. Warren and the Rev. J. Averill, having been called upon to detail the circumstances of their recent expulsion from the Methodist Connexion,

It was Resolved,—That the most cordial thanks of this meeting be respectfully presented to the Rev. Dr. Samuel Warren, and to the Rev. John Averill, for the noble and magnanimous defence made by them before the Conference, and that it begs affectionately to sympathise with them under circumstances so extraordinary, and so deeply to be deplored.

A note from the President of Conference having been received, informing the Delegates that they might confidently expect a communication by twelve o'clock the following day,

It was Resolved,—That a communication having been received from the President of the Conference, again stating, that our Address to that Body shall be answered by Thursday at twelve o'clock, the members of this Delegate Meeting consent to wait until that time, for such reply.

Resolved,—That the following Protest be entered upon the Minutes of this Meeting:—

PROTEST.

That, although the Meeting does thus determine to wait the reply of the Conference, until the period mentioned, by which that Body will be deprived of the possibility of alleging the refusal of the Delegates to treat with them even at their own time—unreasonable and unnecessary as such a demand under the circumstances is—yet the Delegates feel it a duty they owe to themselves individually, and to the Societies which they represent, to place upon the Minutes of their proceedings, a Protest against such an unwarrantable course.

Resolved,—That this Meeting having deliberately, and in the fear of God, considered the position in which it now stands, with reference to our great Connexion,

Resolves,—1st. That, representing, as it does, the sentiments of tens of thousands of the members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society, it cannot but deeply deplore the obvious disinclination on the part of the Conference to promote, through the Delegates, an amicable adjustment of existing differences.

2. That the time already spent in correspondence with the President without any satisfactory result, and the impossibility of the Delegates remaining much longer from their homes, render it absolutely necessary, however undesirable, immediately to enter upon the discussion of ulterior proceedings, in case the Conference should refuse the just demands of the people.

ACCORDINGLY IT WAS RESOLVED,—

That it be recommended to the friends of Methodist Reform, in every part of our Connexion, not to unite themselves with any other religious body, nor to form themselves into any separate community, but to act in concert, and remain associated together until the next Conference, under regulations afterwards to be submitted, and to be designated the Wesleyan-Methodist Association; the great object of which shall be to regain and effectually secure the rights and liberties of the Wesleyan community.

Resolved,—That a Central Committee be appointed, which shall consist of all the officers in the Manchester and Liverpool Circuits connected with the Wesleyan-Methodist Association; to which communications may be made on all subjects which may be deemed necessary by the District or other correspondents.

Resolved,—That measures be adopted for the formation of a Branch Association, in the first instance, in every District, preparatory to forming one in every Circuit in the Connexion.

Resolved,—That persons be deputed to represent, superintend, and further the interests of the Association in the respective Conference Districts; whose duty it shall be to correspond and exchange visits with other persons in the same Districts, for the purpose of holding public meetings, and circulating our publications throughout the various Circuits therein; and from time to time to report progress to the Secretary of the Central Committee.

Resolved,—That a fund be established for the promotion of the objects of this Meeting, which shall be under the management of the Central Committee, to which every Circuit united with the Wesleyan-Methodist Association be respectfully requested to contribute; and that a Sub-Committee of Finance be appointed to take this subject under consideration.

The following report of the Sub Committee of Finance having been given in:—

"The Sub-Committee appointed to take into consideration the state of the finances of the Association, and also to devise the ways and means for future operations, beg to report, that the most equitable mode of meeting the exigencies of the approaching year would be to prevail upon the Delegates to pledge them-

selves to raise 2s. per annum from each member. The sum so provided is calculated to meet all the current expenses of the ensuing year (including the balance due on Dr. Warren's Chancery suit). It is necessary, however, that this sum be remitted to the Treasurer by quarterly instalments.

"Your Committee beg further to observe, that, in case of a happy and successful termination of the proceedings of this Association, it is obvious that the whole of the above estimates will be unnecessary; but that still the first instalment will be needed to settle finally all outstanding accounts, rents for offices in Manchester and Liverpool, the legal expenses of Dr. Warren's late suit, and to cover any loss that may be sustained by the publishers of the *Lantern*, and other publications of this Association."

It was Resolved,—That the Report of the Finance Committee now read be adopted.

Resolved,—That the Central Committee be authorised to engage and employ such additional Lecturers and Preachers, as circumstances, during the next year, may require.

Resolved,—That a Committee be appointed, to whom matters of difficult arrangement, relating to Chapel Trusts, and any other subject connected with the present state of the affairs of the Connexion, may be referred.

2.—That the following gentlemen, with power to add to their number, be the Committee for the ensuing year:—Mr. George Hughes, Manchester; Mr. Wm. Smith, Reddish House, Stockport; Mr. Geo. Matthews, Manchester; Mr. Wm. Wood, Manchester; Mr. Jabez Sanderson, Manchester; Mr. Richard Farrer, Liverpool; Mr. John Beynon, Liverpool.

Resolved,—That in places where the regular Society Tickets may be refused, it is recommended that application be made to the Central Committee, for those of the Wesleyan-Methodist Association, that the people may be preserved in regular religious communion. That there be an effort to revive genuine godliness throughout the Connexion; keeping in diligent exercise the talents and piety of the Local Preachers, as well as those of every Member of Society, who can be thus employed.

Resolved,—That the various Societies expelled, or the members of which may refuse to hear the preachers appointed by Conference, in cases where they cannot hire convenient places of worship, be recommended to erect temporary buildings of wood, or Tabernacles, to serve them during the coming year; and that the Delegates be supplied with a Lithographed plan of such buildings upon the most feasible and economical principle.

Resolved,—That, should any Circuit, during that period, require the services of a preacher, to be employed altogether in the work of the ministry, it is recommended that they communicate with the Central Committee on the subject.

Resolved,—That the Rev. Dr. Warren, Rev. Jas. Lamb, and Rev. J. Averill, be respectfully solicited by this meeting, to assist during the ensuing year, in effecting the great objects of the Association.

Resolved,—That the Rev. Messrs. Emmett and Gordon be respectfully requested to render such assistance, in the holding of public meetings, &c., as may be in their power.

Resolved,—That this Meeting deem it necessary, that increased efforts be made to liquidate the expenses of the late Chancery Suit, and that the names of the Delegates be taken down, who will engage to promote this object in their Circuits, by public or private collections, on or before the 1st of September. The reply of the Conference, to the Address presented to them from the Meeting on the 1st instant, having at length been received (on the 6th instant, at 1 p. m.), it was

Resolved,—That this Meeting deeply deplores the unconciliatory spirit which characterises the reply of the Conference, to the Address of this Meeting of Delegates, and painfully feels that all hope of an amicable adjustment of existing differences is, for the present, extinguished.

ACCORDINGLY IT WAS RESOLVED,—

That this meeting has great pleasure in recording the high sense which it entertains of the independent and disinterested conduct of the Rev. Dr. Warren, Rev. Robert Emmett, Rev. James Lamb, Rev. John Gordon, and the Rev. John Averill, in the countenance and support which they have rendered to the Wesleyan-Methodist Association: and also to all the other Travelling Preachers, who, through their attachment to liberal principles in the administration of Methodist law and discipline, during the course of the past year, have been censured by the Conference.

Resolved,—That this meeting takes the present opportunity of expressing its satisfaction at the general excellent spirit and ability, with which the publication called "The Watchman's Lantern," has been carried on, under circumstances of frequent difficulty and provocation, and offers its most sincere thanks to the editors and conductors of that periodical: and that they be requested to continue their valuable services in the promotion of the great and important objects of the Association.

Resolved,—That this meeting, deeply impressed with the important services of the *Christian Advocate* newspaper, to the cause of religious liberty, embraces the present opportunity of offering to its conductors, its most sincere and grateful acknowledgments, for the support which the cause of Wesleyan-Methodist Reform has received from their exertions.

Resolved,—That the best thanks of the Meeting are due to George Cookman, Esq., President of this Meeting, for the kind and able manner in which he has conducted its arduous and important business.

Resolved,—That the thanks of the Meeting be given to Messrs. R. Grindrod and John Wood, for their valuable services as Secretaries to this Meeting.

Resolved,—That this Meeting presents its thanks to those friends in Sheffield, who have so kindly entertained the Delegates on the present occasion.

Resolved,—That this Meeting offers to the Trustees and Society of Surrey-street Chapel its thanks, for the use of the said chapel, for the purposes of its business.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting,

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.
R. B. GRINDROD, } Secretaries.*
JOHN WOOD, }

Surrey-street Chapel, Sheffield, Aug. 6, 1835.

* Mr. Wm. Wood, of Manchester, the Senior Secretary, was unavoidably absent from the Meeting, in consequence of severe indisposition.

EXTRACTS

FROM

LETTERS ADDRESSED TO THE DELEGATES ASSEMBLED IN SHEFFIELD, &c.

The following is the declaration of fourteen official members of the Durham circuit.

"We, the undersigned Local Preachers, Leaders, and Trustees of the Durham Wesleyan Society, are pressed with the propriety and necessity of a thorough reformation in the present mode of administering the affairs and expounding the rules of the Connexion, adopted by the preachers, in despite of the opinions and religious rights of the people; we, therefore, gladly co-operate with those who are determined to cause those rights to be respected, and the abuses which have deformed our system of church-government to be corrected."

The letter from the Nantwich Association is signed by the Chairman and Secretary. Part of it is as follows:—

"The present state of our circuit we believe to be nearly as follows:—

Those who have left the Society, and associated with the expelled brethren.....	400
Those who remain in the Society, but have stopped all supplies	100
Those who remain in the Society, and stopped the supplies under Conference control; and say, if nothing is done at Conference, they will join us.....	200
Those who are for partial reformation; such as a revision of the rules; a disavowal of the 'Leeds Case;' and a partial abandonment of the <i>Theological Institution</i> —that is, in reference to the education of preachers for the home work.....	300
Conference adherents	200
	<hr/>
	Total 1,200

Number of Association preaching-places, in each of which we have societies, including four chapels	12
Number of local preachers to supply those places	20

And 'The best of all is, *God is with us!*' a proof of which is, we have not '*now and then*' conversions, but frequently, in almost each of the above societies, demonstrations of the power of God to save sinners. *May God carry on the work!*"

A letter from Northampton, signed by an individual, contains the following facts:—

"The preachers have told us Conference will assuredly meet us, and nearly come to our wishes; otherwise we should have had Dr. Warren and Mr. Gordon, &c., to lecture before now. There are about 300 members in this town, but only about 100 real reformers. Twenty of the local preachers, and they the best of the men, out of thirty, are real reformers, and about three or four trustees, one Circuit Steward, and several in the villages. Daventry circuit passed some strong resolutions, with the Superintendent in the chair. The majority was eleven to five. The Superintendent of Daventry sent the resolutions over here to Mr. Hinson, the chairman, to take to Conference; but we are afraid they will not be read out. If things are not settled, we shall be very glad to know when the Doctor and his friends will be near or through here, because we mean to have a meeting. We are well assured that the Dissenters will greatly help us; and even the foremost of the Conference party want to hear the Doctor and his friends from that part. We say here there ought to be more lecturing through the country."

A document signed by the circuit stewards of Stourbridge, on behalf of upwards of seventy official members, states:—

"In our circuit there are at present upwards of *one thousand members* in Society, in an unexampled state of peace and prosperity; and we think we may AFFIRM that there is not an INDIVIDUAL among us who is not determined to contend, by all lawful means, for the *Original Laws of Methodism*, as laid down by the venerable *Wesley*, and amended by the Conference, 1797."

A letter from Bradford, Yorkshire, signed by the Chairman of the Association at that place, contains the following:—

"Those that have come forward to be members of the Association, are only few; some wish to defer entering till after Conference: but, upon the whole, we can say safely that a majority of the society is for a reform. We have had a deal of opposition to contend with since we began the Association."

The letter of an individual of Ruabon, in the Wrexham Circuit, says—

"We are, thank God, going on prosperously in this Circuit: our members have very much increased during the last quarter; and those of us who have been in the front of the battle are neither cast down nor destroyed."

The letter of an individual in the Stockton Circuit says—

"I cannot give you so satisfactory an account of the feelings of the people in this Circuit, in favour of Wesleyan Reform, as I could have wished; but many, I believe, wish well to the good cause, and there are a few sound, firm, steady, and thorough Reformers. I trust that you will not give up any one essential principle, and shall be glad to learn that you have carried unanimously the leading principle of lay-delegation; without this, *nothing will be effectual*."

Another letter, signed by an individual, says—

"Worksop is ardently desirous of forming a branch Association; all the official men, with only one exception, are in favour of the Association."

A letter from Wallsend, signed by ten official members, contains the following:—

"The principal part of our Circuit in favour of a Methodist Reform; it must not be a half one; nothing but a Radical reform will do; lay-delegation is the only cure."

The following is an extract from the letter of an individual in Hull:—

"The Conference, by calling together a number of its partisans, probably intends to put into their hands some trifling requests, which they hope may quiet the Connexion, and leave the *power* in their own hands; and perhaps a more wily scheme could not easily have been devised; but our help is in God. David slew Goliath with his sling and his stone; and, although our opponents are numerous, and powerful, and subtle, if the Scriptures be true, God is on our side, and we have no cause to fear."

The declaration of nine official members in Carrickfergus is as follows:—

"We, the undersigned, having always understood that no member of our Society could be expelled without the concurrence of a majority of a Leaders' Meeting, having read with astonishment and grief the many expulsions without such concurrence, do therefore approve of our respected brother, Mr. Samuel Hay, attending the meeting of Delegates at Sheffield, for the purpose of endeavouring to have the above law (which not only leaders, but most of our preachers in Ireland, *thought* was Methodist law) fully acknowledged and ratified, by the ensuing Conference, and any other salutary law, that may have a tendency to support our beloved Methodism without any more divisions."

The certificate of the Burnley Delegates, which is signed by three official members, states—

"The interest represented by the Delegates sent from this place is considerable. We have 600 members of Society, three travelling [Protestant] and eleven local preachers; there are thirty trustees, which, with all the class-leaders, are unanimous in requesting nothing less than a Scriptural reform and lay-delegation in Conference."

The letter of an individual in Edinburgh, contains the following:—

"We are decided, and almost unanimous, in favour of a more liberal and scriptural administration of church-government; but, as a *Circuit*, we are *peculiarly* circumstanced. Had we not been cautious, and exercised sagacity in our proceedings, it is probable Mr. Beaumont would have been removed from us. Of this we have not now much fear, for from a letter received this day, we learn that he is again down for Edinburgh. Having, therefore, obtained our wish in this particular, we may with greater freedom endeavour to help on the cause of Methodist Reform. We have not, however, been altogether indifferent or supine hitherto; we have *done* something, and *said* a good deal, which we expect will be sounded within certain *closed doors*; for we believe we will have a *representative and friend in court*—I need say no more."

Fifteen official members of the Patrington Circuit, signed a declaration to this effect:—

"We, the undersigned, members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society (Patrington Circuit), lament the unsettled and unhappy state of our Connexion; and, believing it to arise from the *irresponsible power of our preachers*, and the ambiguous and undefined state of our laws, we heartily coincide with the formation of the Central and other Associations, whose aim, we believe, is to curtail the power of the preachers, and get a constitution based on the *principles of the Gospel* and the *rights of man*; and to effect this, we think a wise revision of our laws, a discontinuance of the Theological Institution, as uncalled for, and lay-delegation, in the fullest sense, will be the means of effecting *present tranquillity and lasting unity*."

A letter, signed on behalf of the South Shields Branch Association by its Secretary, contains the following passage:—

"We still consider lay-representation to be the only safe guarantee of our liberties. There has been no public meeting amongst us, so that the strength of liberal feeling has not been yet

proved; but our opinion on this subject cannot be better expressed than in the words of Mr. Parker at the Manchester meeting, that, "at present, there is a gentle rippling on the surface, but a tremendous under-current, which, at the most suitable opportunity, will not fail to burst forth."

An official member of the Daventry Circuit writes as follows:—

"We generally are with you. We circulate information, and the advocates of reform multiply. At our last Quarterly Meeting, held June 29, the following resolution was put and carried, after a warm resistance by our preachers, and two or three of their friends; *the Rev. J. Cheesevright in the chair*. 'Resolved,—That this Meeting, deeply impressed with the increasing dissatisfaction which prevails amongst our people with the rules and usages of Methodism, as lately interpreted and administered, wishes to express its earnest desire that the ensuing Conference will endeavour to put an end to strife and agitation, by revising the Society's rules, and adopting such comprehensive and liberal measures, as shall be at once Scriptural in their character, and suited to the times in which we live.' An amendment was moved by our junior preacher, and negatived. The above resolution was then carried by a large majority; there being only five against it, including the two travelling preachers."

An individual gives the following account of the state and prospects of the Warrington Branch Association:—

"On the 19th July, we opened a more suitable room as our place of worship, which will accommodate from 350 to 400 persons. Our congregations (now that we have a regular supply of preachers) increase; and of the funds the treasurer does not complain. Our unanimous vote is 'Lay-delegation in Conference, and all District Meetings, on the broadest and most liberal principle.' The Warrington Circuit (and I would observe that I have taken the highest possible number from a local preacher, or rather from two local preachers now on the plan) contains 611 members. There are three travelling preachers, and twenty-six local preachers; making a very comfortable congregation of about twenty-one persons for each preacher, were they equally divided. Surely this case is without a parallel! It is a notorious fact, that one of the principal men, or, rather, influential men, who takes a most prominent part at the Leaders' Stewards, Trustee, and Quarterly Meetings—is not a member of the Society!"

"During a number of years, the Society has decreased; but more particularly so during the last two years, under the Superintendency of Mr. Jackson, who for some cause (not on account of his usefulness) is to stay a third year!"

"The whole of the circuit is in a very bad state. I am informed by one of the Conference local preachers, that the country chapels and preaching-houses are almost deserted. Bank-street chapel is generally nearly filled with the same satisfied congregation, who are for Methodism 'as it is:' and not more (I believe) than about one-sixth are members of Society."

"There is not one dissentient voice in the Warrington Branch Association; but all are for lay-delegation in Conference."

The following is the substance of a letter, signed by twenty-one official members of the Stockton Circuit:—

"We take this opportunity of making known our sentiments on the causes and probable remedies for the present disturbances, more especially because we have attempted to do so at our regular Quarterly Meeting, held on the 30th of June last, and were prevented doing so, by the presiding preacher's refusing to put our resolutions to the vote, by which we were deprived of our rights as Englishmen, as Christians, and as Methodists, whilst at the same time every facility was given to those of our brethren who hold opposite opinions, to state their views on the same subjects."

"We believe that the present agitated state of the Body arises from the assumption, by the Conference, of the sole legislative, judicial, and executive power of the Connexion, to the exclusion of the people as represented in their respective local meetings, and thereby, instead of being essentially one, and having one common interest, as the church of Christ ought to have, they are constituted antagonist powers, which gives rise to heart-burnings and jealousies the one of the other."

"We enumerate, as evidence of the correctness of our opinions on the general cause of discontent, the following particulars:—

"1st. Interference with our civil rights, by the Conference of 1834 confirming the Manchester District Minutes, and by the adoption of certain political opinions as Wesleyan."

"2nd. The absolute suppression of the sentiments of the people, in their Quarterly Meetings, when such sentiments are found to be contrary to the views of the Superintendent, or the proceedings of Conference."

"3rd. The exclusion of both official and private members of Society, for the alleged breach of some mere ecclesiastical regulation, without any moral offence, such act of expulsion being the sole act of the Superintendent preacher, without the consent, and in some cases contrary to the solemn protest, of the Leaders' Meeting."

"4th. The holding of Special District Meetings, composed of travelling preachers alone, for the purpose of determining upon accusations brought against preachers, instead of being constituted according to the rules of 1794 and 1795."

"5th. The establishment of the Wesleyan Theological Institution, without first having obtained the approbation of the Societies, through their official meetings."

"In these particulars principally, we believe, will be found the sources of the present agitated state of the Connexion. To remove these well-founded causes of complaint, and restore to the

Societies that confidence and affection which should subsist between ministers and their people, we respectfully state our belief that the following regulations are essentially necessary :—

"1st. A careful revision of all our laws, and a faithful attention in future to their provisions.

"2nd. That the Quarterly Meetings be legally composed of travelling and local preachers, leaders, stewards, and trustees, being members of Society, and that all the business which does not properly belong to the Leaders' or Trustees' Meetings, be there transacted, so that the official characters may have a voice in all the affairs of the Circuit.

"3rd. That all the official meetings shall have the unfettered right of addressing the Conference on any subject they may think affects their interest; and that no Superintendent, as chairman *ex officio*, shall be allowed to prohibit an official meeting from passing resolutions expressive of their sentiments, for the purpose of conveying such sentiments to the Conference; and that if any Superintendent should refuse to put to the vote any resolutions regularly proposed for the before-mentioned purpose, then the meeting shall have the power to appoint another person to be for that time chairman of the meeting.

"4th. That no member be either taken into or expelled from the Society, without the consent of a majority of the Leaders' Meeting; that no person be appointed to the offices of local preacher or leader, or removed from their offices, but with the concurrence of a majority of the meetings composed of these respective characters; and that stewards and trustees shall be appointed or removed by the majority of the Quarterly Meeting only.

"5th. That before any new rule or regulation affecting the Societies be passed by the Conference, the opinions of the people, in their Quarterly Meetings, shall be taken thereupon; and, in the event of a numerical majority being found to be against such measure, or rule, that it shall not be brought into operation.

"6th. When any accusation is made against a travelling preacher, which may require investigation previous to the meeting of Conference, the tribunal for such purpose be composed of the travelling preachers in the District, and the local preachers, leaders, stewards, and trustees of the Circuit in which such travelling preacher is labouring at the time such accusation is made.

"7th. That the opinions of the Societies be taken on the Wesleyan Theological Institution, both with respect to its continuance, and the propriety of modifying some of its present arrangements. We protest against the exclusive power exercised by the Conference in its establishment, and we have serious fears lest it should raise Methodism above its providential course of usefulness, bring to nought the mixed character of itinerant and local preaching, destroy the characteristic simplicity and fervour of our ministry, and give into the hands of a few the power which ought only to be possessed by many.

"8th. That our preachers neither individually nor collectively espouse any political cause whatsoever; and that the whole management of the secular and money affairs of the Connexion be committed to the hands of respectable laymen.

"This last regulation would, we hope, enable our ministers to give more time to the essential duty of pastoral visitation, and the good old practice of imparting religious instruction to the children of those who are members of Society. These features of the Methodism of former times, duly regarded, would prove to all, but especially the poor of Christ's flock, a great and constant blessing. Should the course we have ventured to recommend be adopted, it is probable the strong feelings of dissatisfaction which agitate the minds of numbers of our brethren will subside, and the unity and prosperity of our Societies be perpetuated."

The Circuit Stewards of Ipswich make the following communication :—

"At the Quarterly Meeting of the Ipswich Circuit, held at Woodbridge, June 30, 1835; the following resolutions was put to the Chair, but refused to be read or put to the vote by the Chairman (Mr. W. Griffith, Superintendent). We therefore elected a Chairman, and put the following resolution, which we now transmit to you :—

"We, the members of the Quarterly Meeting of the Ipswich Circuit, respectfully express our cordial attachment to Wesleyan Methodism, and our sincere desire for its peace and prosperity, and regret that any circumstance should exist to agitate and prevent the prosperity of the Connexion; and while we deplore this state of things, and have refrained from intermeddling as a Circuit, we conceive it to be our duty to express our conscientious opinion, that we believe various circumstances which have recently transpired, have unitedly contributed to this unpleasant state of things. One of which we earnestly hope the Conference will give its serious consideration to, viz.—the revision of our rules, to prevent the forcible exclusion of our brethren, many of whom, we fear, have been excluded contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the rules referring to that subject.

"That it seems necessary to this meeting, for the furtherance of the peace and prosperity of the Connexion, that Lay Delegates should meet in Conference with the Preachers as Co-legislators, being the best security against any breach of the Constitution in time to come."

The official members of the Congleton Circuit, resident in Sandbach, write as follows :—

"A great majority of the intelligent part of the Society, who have examined the subject, are decidedly in favour of the principles of the Association; and the remainder, we have no doubt, will speedily follow. Should the Conference attempt to crush the Association, or turn a deaf ear to its voice, we are persuaded it will have the effect of oil poured on the fire. Should they be so obstinate as to resist your endeavours, the officers of the Society in Sandbach, who here subscribe their names, are resolved to protract the struggle until they obtain a pure and a Scriptural form of church government."

In the letter of seven official members of the Stafford Circuit, we find the following paragraph :—

"For a long time have some of us felt in a painful manner those grievances so justly and so generally complained of, and which still have existence in our Connexion, to the destruction of its true peace and piety; and, so deep is our conviction that our body will ever be exposed to such agitations and disturbances as now experienced until an effectual check is given to the irresponsible power of the preachers, that we are determined no specious promises of concession and pacification shall satisfy us—nothing short of the introduction of intelligent laymen into our District Meetings and Conferences."

The memorial of the Birmingham Branch Association, which numbers twenty-three official members, contains the following sensible remarks :—

"We give our most hearty assent to the principle which you have laid down as the basis of your plan, viz.—the right of interference on the part of the members of the church, in the regulation of all its affairs. This is Scriptural ground, and we may safely build upon it. The recognition of this grand principle should be most unequivocal and uncompromising.

"With regard to the application of this principle to our connexional form of government, as partially carried out in your nine propositions, we cordially agree, as far as it extends; but, after a careful examination of the said propositions, we adjudge them as omitting some very important matters, which if not embodied, the scheme will prove altogether abortive in securing us from the return of former abuses, and raising us to the standard of a Scriptural church.

"In the first place, you lay down no plan for a more equitable adjustment in the right of nomination. This, we conceive, ought to have been placed at the very front of your propositions. Its importance certainly demanded such distinction. For, whilst the preachers' pet doctrine of irresponsible power is the fountain, or, if you please, the working out, of ecclesiastical corruptions and abuses, exclusive nomination is the main flood-gate by which they are let in upon the church. There is, moreover, no special provision made for an equitable form of trial, in cases of delinquency, &c., on the part of the officers, or private members, nor for fixing decisively the court to which they shall severally be amenable. This, also, is a matter of primary importance, and has been one of the most fruitful occasions of our present troubles. A third particular, not embraced in your resolutions, which we would urge upon your attention, is the right of members to make choice of the Leader to whose care they shall be entrusted.

"Propositions embodying the above particulars were submitted and passed unanimously in our committee, and subsequently at a general meeting of the members.

"Thus, brethren, you perceive that we are resolutely determined to affix the seal of our approval to no measure of reform which faileth in its articles to embody and secure to the people, as their just and inalienable right, the full enjoyment of that Christian liberty which is authorised by the word of God, and was acted upon in the primitive church."

The following is the letter of a Cornish gentleman, whom illness prevented from rendering the Delegates his powerful assistance :—

"The circumstances under which Mr. Wesley commenced the formation of his societies, rendered it necessary that he should appoint Leaders and Stewards, and call out preachers as he saw necessary. This power, which he retained to the end of his life, was exercised by the Superintendents of Circuits until 1797, when the Conference granted, as a concession, that no person should be appointed a Leader or Steward, or be removed from office, but with the concurrence of the Leaders' or Quarterly Meeting: the nomination to be in the Superintendent, and the approval or disapproval in the meeting. But this in practice has been found wholly inoperative: the preacher does not give the meeting a choice; he merely nominates one person as a candidate; if he be rejected, he then names another: so that the meeting never have two candidates before them at the same time. This, with the ungracious task of absolute rejection, without knowing who may be proposed in consequence, gives the Superintendent in reality the absolute appointment in ninety-nine cases out of 100. Thus the Superintendent has the power of absolutely excluding from office any individual who may be displeasing to him, and of packing the Leaders' and Quarterly Meetings, with subservient instruments, ready to sanction whatever he may propose, and to aid in filling up all vacancies by men of like spirit with themselves. While the exclusive power of nomination remains with the Superintendent, there can be no independence in a Leaders' or Quarterly Meeting. Mr. Wesley, however, towards the close of his life, was especially anxious to secure to the preachers the exclusive right of officiating in the chapels of the Connexion, which were generally erected by a number of persons uniting in borrowing the sums of money necessary for completing each building, taking the rent of the pews for payment of the interest of the money so borrowed, and for gradually liquidating the debt. The persons borrowing were principally responsible for the amount; and, having the chapel as a security, were called Trustees. In general, the property was at first vested in one or two persons, who conveyed it to a greater number by deeds which bound them to allow Mr. Wesley and the preachers appointed by him (but no others), at all times to preach and expound the Scriptures in the said chapel or chapels.

"As was naturally to be expected, Mr. Wesley was anxious to secure to the preachers the exclusive use of the chapels; and various plans were devised for that purpose. In 1784, Mr. Wesley executed what is called the Deed of Declaration, or Deed Poll, constituting a Hundred Preachers, whom he named therein (dead or alive!), as constituting a Conference, and giving them power to nominate any new members to fill up vacancies, annually occasioned by death or other causes. To this Conference he gave the sole power of appointing, from year to year, the persons who should have the

exclusive right of preaching in the several chapels, and of making various collections therein, in order to raise money for different purposes connected with the Methodist ministry. Now, it is evident, that, by this Deed, Mr. Wesley attempted to create a corporation; giving to the One Hundred Preachers first-named, and to their successors regularly chosen by the surviving majority, certain legal rights, which they have an assumed power to delegate to others for limited periods. The grand question is, could Mr. Wesley legally do so? Could he, or any subject of this realm, create a Corporation bestowing legal rights, and providing for perpetuating the corporate body, by supplying vacancies therein? It is now generally admitted, by persons of legal knowledge, that he could not; and that an attempt on the part of the Conference, or of any of those preachers appointed by it, to enforce the exclusive right they are supposed to possess of preaching in the different chapels, would fail, notwithstanding such chapels may be settled on what is termed the Conference Plan. For, how could the Conference, as a body legally constituted, sue in a Court of law, for enforcing their supposed rights? Could they proceed by their President and Secretary, or are the whole Hundred preachers to be made joint plaintiffs in the suit? Again:—How could the preachers appointed by them, and not being part of the Hundred, enforce their delegated authority? or how legally prove that delegation? I hold, therefore, that, so far as regards the exclusive use of chapels, and the right of making collections in them, the Deed of Declaration is wholly invalid; and that the different chapels are the sole property of their respective Trustees, who cannot be legally compelled to admit any persons to officiate, contrary to their own will and pleasure.

“Whilst the Preachers and Trustees maintain a good understanding, things proceed smoothly; but, should the former attempt to act in an arbitrary manner, setting aside the laws and usages of the Connexion, in order to expel persons who may become displeasing to them; should they assume an authority, contrary to that sanctioned in the New Testament, and opposed to the principles of the English constitution, then it is in the power of each separate body of Trustees, to prohibit their preaching in their respective chapels, and to treat any man, attempting to force himself into the pulpit of any such chapels, as a trespasser. The first attempt made to enforce, by legal means, the supposed exclusive right of the Conference to any chapel, would bring the matter to issue, and show that no such right legally exists!

“If this were once clearly established, the Conference would speedily feel the necessity of conciliating the people by such reasonable concessions as would satisfy all moderate men. With the knowledge that the Deed of Declaration is invalid, and the giving up of the preachers' exclusive right to nominate Leaders and Stewards, and thus the popularisation of the Connexion, in the creation of all officers, I conceive, every really valuable object which Methodist Reformers could desire, would be accomplished; and, without these changes, neither lay-delegation, nor the abandonment of the Theological Institution, nor the trial of preachers as contended for by Dr. Warren, would be of any real permanent advantage.

“Why the two points I have mentioned,—1. Exclusive nomination; and, 2. The invalidity of the Deed of Declaration,—have been wholly lost sight of, it is hard to say! If the alone object of Dr. Warren, and Mr. Stephens, of the *Christian Advocate*, is to increase the influence of the people, and to create really independent Leaders and Stewards, the power of excluding arbitrary preachers from the chapels would do so. I confess, I have been almost led to suspect the object of some of those Reformers, who have been very vehement, is party, not the public, the people's rights. Of what use would lay-delegates to Conference be, unless there were independent Stewards to select them? To show that the Deed of Declaration is invalid, would do more to humble the arrogance of priestly preachers, than the formation of one hundred Associations, to stop supplies, or the secession of 10,000 members.”

APPEAL OF THE DELEGATES

ASSEMBLED AT THE

SHEFFIELD CONFERENCE,

TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM.

BELOVED BRETHREN,—

To whom can we now appeal but to you, and, as our venerable father, the Rev. John Wesley, in his day did, "to men of reason and religion." At the urgent request of thousands of our associated brethren, and with the concurrent wishes of thousands of others, equally impressed as ourselves with the critical and dangerous state of the Methodist Connexion, we repaired to this town, in order to represent to the assembled Conference the many and grievous wrongs inflicted by some of the preachers, during the past year, upon many of the most pious and exemplary members of the Methodist Societies in various parts of the Kingdom. Mindful of the professions made by the Conference of 1796, in similar circumstances,—That they were "desirous of having every proper information of whatever concerned themselves or their people, and would gladly receive intelligence, not only from the Leaders' and Quarterly Meetings, but from any individual members of Society, as well at the District Meeting as at the Conference,"—the Delegates expected the privilege of being allowed to utter their complaints in the "paternal ears" of Conference, in order to obtain some redress of their grievances, and protection against future injuries. In this expectation they were confirmed, or at least in the expectation of obtaining a patient *hearing*, not only from their former professions, but also from the kind and courteous manner in which the Conference of 1797 received the Delegates of that year, and entered into friendly and satisfactory negotiations with them, notwithstanding they had deemed it necessary, contrary to the recommendation of the preceding Conference, to "circulate letters, call meetings, do or attempt to do, [something] new, [before] it had been first appointed by the Conference;" ay, and to *associate* themselves, too, in order to obtain their just rights. Nor did it once enter into the minds of Superintendent preachers of that day, to usurp the power of excommunicating members of Society by hundreds and by thousands, for disregarding the recommendation of 1796, any more than of the following Conference to employ the circumstance of such unjust and tyrannical treatment received by their members, at the hands of rash and indiscreet Superintendents, as an argument why their sufferings were entitled to no consideration by that assembly, and why it should listen to no appeal.

Such, however, is not the conduct, such are not the dispositions of the present race of Wesleyan Preachers, and of the Methodist Conference, "as at present constituted." The arrogant pretensions to "*irresponsible and irresistible power*," lately set up in behalf of the Conference, by one of their advocates, in the Court of Chancery, are now no longer dissembled; but it is unblushingly claimed by the preachers as their right, and employed by them with a recklessness of consequences which astonishes the whole Christian world! On the contrary, whilst thousands of the *people* have been made the victims of relentless cruelty and oppression, in no instance have the rashness and indiscretion of Superintendent *preachers*, and their flagrant violation of the essential rules of the Body, been visited with punishment or rebuke; but their violence and oppression have been applauded and recompensed by the Conference, and their conduct held up for imitation by the rest of their brethren.

Of the accuracy of this melancholy statement, the facts of the case, which we now proceed briefly to narrate, afford but too satisfactory proof. Without stopping to detail the *first* great infraction made in the Methodist constitution, when the principal boundaries, which protected the people's rights against the encroachments of Conference power were thrown down and trampled under foot, in the well-known case of Leeds in 1827, we shall only remark, that a vigorous resistance on the part of the great body of the people *at that time*, would probably have prevented the present more alarming crisis, by restricting the erratic stream within its legitimate banks, before it became a headlong torrent. The extent of the mischief occasioned by that direful eruption did not at once appear, except to the discerning few, who could not, from that moment, look into the future without dismay. Their forebodings were sufficiently known to serve as an index to the future current of events, and are justly quoted now as having been little less than oracular. Not, however, till nearly seven years had elapsed were the stealthy encroachments of Conferential power discovered to have reached such a height, as to set at defiance all interposition of the people to restrict or check its exercise, or protect themselves against its arbitrary and injurious inflictions. Of this, the establishment of the Theological Institution, for the education of the preachers, is a sufficient proof, together with the appropriation of a large sum of money annually towards its support, from a fund created and supported by the public, solely for Missionary work, without ever consulting the wishes of the contributors, or obtaining their approbation. The establishment of the Institution itself was as unconstitutional as the misappropriation of the Missionary Fund was unwarrantable. Before any such step had been definitely taken, the Conference was hound in honour, by its own resolution in 1797, to give "a year's consideration" to the people, in order to obtain "the knowledge of the sentiments of the Connexion at large, through the medium of all their public officers." Yet, without any such deliberation, this momentous affair, which threatens to change the entire character of the Body, was hurried to its conclusion, not only without the knowledge or

concurrence of the people, but also against the solemn remonstrance of many of the senior preachers at the time, and some of the Loudon Trustees, who, being on the spot, had the opportunity of expressing their sentiments on the subject.

This violation of faith in the *first* instance, on the part of the Conference, relative to the Theological Institution, gave rise to a series of complaints on the part of the people; and these again were the pretext for fresh aggressions of the preachers on the rights and privileges of the officers and members of the Societies, till some of the most important Circuits in the Connexion were reduced to a state of almost entire anarchy and dissolution. The members of Quarter-days were no longer permitted to express their sentiments on passing events in their own properly constituted assemblies; and if they expressed them elsewhere, they were summoned to take their trial for attending *illegal meetings*; and at the sole will of the Superintendent preacher, without the approbation, and in defiance of the protests of Leaders' Meetings who tried him, were, contrary to the rules of the Society, as printed at the Conference Book-Room, expelled the Society! Thus have officers of Society, and private members in multitudes, been severed from Christian communion without any charge, or even the slightest imputation of doctrinal error or moral turpitude. The same persecuting spirit has proceeded to inflict the highest possible penalties within the power of the Conference, on some of our most talented, pious, and useful travelling preachers, men whose moral and religious character, though incessantly assailed both from the pulpit and the press, by the agents of Conference, the breath of slander has been unable in the least to tarnish, men whose only crime is the advocacy of the rights of the people, the love of Christian liberty, and the hatred of spiritual despotism. In these circumstances, the only resource left to the scattered flocks to prevent their utter loss to Methodism has been, to form themselves into a close compacted *Association*, with a view to the cultivation of personal piety and usefulness, and to seek reunion with our brethren in the former fold, on reasonable and scriptural terms. But this very *Association* is now made by the Conference the unpardonable sin, on which it has denounced its utmost anathema.

All that now remains, in discharging the important duties confided to us, is, faithfully to state the manner in which we were treated by the Conference, and to make a few remarks upon the public document with which, at length, that reverend assembly honoured us. Immediately upon our meeting together, and reviewing the general principles which were adopted at a provisional meeting, convened by the United Central Association, held in Manchester in the month of April last, it became the subject of our most anxious deliberation how to moderate our claims for redress of past grievances, and protection for the future, so that there might be no reasonable obstacle in the way of an amicable and Christian adjustment of existing differences. In the fear of God, and after much prayer for wisdom and grace, our assembly were unanimous in yielding all that in conscience they could do, to meet the Conference on terms which we believe might easily have been accommodated, had there been in the hearts of the preachers the least desire to effect reconciliation and promote peace.

On Friday, 31st of July, the assembled Delegates sent a note to the President of the Conference, signifying, in the most respectful manner, their wish to know at what hour, on the following day, it would be most convenient for them to receive their Address. Vague replies, and equivocal expressions, were from time to time returned by the President, in answer to our communications; still, however, artfully holding out the expectation to the Delegates that negotiation might be expected at as early a period as urgent business would permit. After thus keeping the meeting in suspense for a whole week, the event justified the prediction of several who saw through the flimsy and dishonourable measures to which the Conference was having recourse,—that they were trifling with our forbearance, and only seeking to gain time to construct a document, so to express their fixed determination to hold no communication whatever with us, as to malign the characters and motives of the Delegates, and all whom they represented, and thus, by contriving to gain the public ear *first*, to prejudice our cause before the religious public, and ruin the victims of their delusion.

On Thursday, August the 6th, the carefully concocted document of Conference was sent down to the Delegates, and at once published to the world. On this production the Delegates beg leave to offer a few remarks, and will then conclude.

I. In the commencement of their document the Conference affect to feel "the greatest surprise," that persons addressing them are described as "Wesleyan Delegates, representing tens of thousands of members of Society;" alleging, as a "*fact*," that no information they had received justified their belief of their statement. Nay that more, "not a single Circuit, or Society, nor even any one *collective body* of Trustees in the whole kingdom, had announced to the Conference its mission of any individual, for purposes so irregular and unconstitutional." Where is the occasion for "surprise," on the part of the Conference, if, among the thousands unjustly and cruelly expelled from the Society, their voice should never have reached the ears of Conference, when those very Superintendents who have expelled them frustrate their appeal, by representing the appellants as not being members of Society, and when the "paternal ears" of Conference are ever open to such representations from the preachers, against an appeal from the people? Where is this wonder, when the only legal method to which members of Society can have recourse, to make known their grievances, is prohibited, if the Conference never hear their complaints? and especially when it has determined to close its "paternal ears" against complaints coming in any other way, because they are said to proceed from "illegal" Associations? Whether the unjustly-expelled members having had recourse to such methods of making known their sufferings, in such circumstances, was the "reverse of those which are fair, open, and manly;" whether, if they were so, the whole blame does not lie at the door of Conference agents, who had left them no other alternative; and whether the Conference has acted the part of *Christian pastors*, or even of *prudent men*, in refusing at least to *listen* to their complaints, let the impartial public judge.

II. Next to the above "weighty objection," is one declared by the Conference to be "*altogether insurmountable*;" namely, their being brought in contact with "such a plan of *confederated delegations*" as that which presented itself to them.—How this obstacle should be altogether insurmountable to such superior wisdom, and such boundless resources, as are claimed by "Methodism as at present constituted," when a similar one was so easily surmounted by Methodism as it was in 1795 and 1797, is somewhat difficult of apprehension, except on the only assumption, that, notwithstanding the vast superiority which present Methodism boasts, it is immeasurably less powerful, and less skilful, than it formerly was. The Methodism of former times found it easy, and perfectly "consistent with the maintenance of Christian order, edification, and peace," at once to listen to such "confederated delegations,"—ay, and to yield their claims too. Had but equal prudence and equal piety guided the counsels of the present race of preachers, as those which characterised the Conferences of 1795 and 1797, the peace and unanimity which they effected would not now have been disturbed, by the violation of that constitution which they conceded to the people. Nor need the present Conference entertain the hope, for it will be vain and delusive, ever to allay the agitation which *they* have occasioned, by retracing but their steps, or by forming a constitution still more rational and scriptural than was once thought to exist in the Plan of Pacification of 1795, and the concessions made at Leeds in 1797, but which a recent discovery has proved to be a *nonentity*, by their

not having been entered in the Conference Journal at the time, which entry is essential to give them the force of law.

III. The Conference having taken "a calm review of various circumstances," proceed to lay before the Delegates and the public the wonderful discovery which has recompensed their careful investigation. They have actually detected, by comparing dates and public documents with the utmost nicety, that the "delusively termed Meeting of Wesleyan Delegates" is in reality connected, both in counsel and operation, with the members of "the Grand Central Association itself!" Why, it was never attempted to be concealed, that both the one and the other were identified in the general purposes for which they were called into existence. None, surely, but the "calm reviewers" in the Conference, would ever have suspected any attempt at "delusion," in what had been openly avowed in almost every possible manner before the whole world. If such a laborious process was necessary for that Reverend body to detect what all the world besides had known long before, it is sufficiently obvious why *Conference legislation* has lately been the sport of the nation before a competent tribunal, for the equivocal, absurd, or crafty rules by which preachers may easily become the "victims" of a faction of their brethren, and the people be deprived of rights and privileges conceded to them in the most solemn manner by the Conference in former years.

IV. With its wonted "Christian simplicity and candour," the Conference "announces at once its deliberate and unalterable resolution" not to hold any intercourse with the said "Grand Central Association, or with any other meeting, however denominated, into which persons who continue to be leading and active members of that confederacy, shall be *notoriously* admitted, and receive approbation and sanction." Whatever credit the present Conference preachers may give each other for "Christian simplicity and candour," in the use of such language as they here employ, the language of their predecessors in 1797 was widely different. No such haughty and repulsive expressions are to be found in their communications. On the contrary, they condescended to treat with the *rebels* of that day, without avowing any such "deliberate and unalterable resolution not to hold any intercourse" with them. They received them with all Christian civility; and, having adjusted their differences, ultimately allowed their claims. Nor can we think that the Conference are justified in employing as an argument against our being permitted to treat with them, that others, who were formerly members of Society, are desirous of uniting with us, in seeking re-union on reasonable and Scriptural terms. What can be conceived more likely, than that those who had been unrighteously excluded from the Society in former years, and on similar grounds, should be desirous of making common cause with those of their brethren who are now striving to recover their rights? What could be more unreasonable in the Association, than to refuse such an overture; unless subsequent moral guilt had forfeited their claim? And with respect to the adoption of "a regular scheme and course of agitation," (as the Conference are pleased to call it,) in the prosecution of our object; what other alternative remained, but either quietly to suffer excommunication from the section of the church of Christ to which we belonged, without any charge of immorality or heterodoxy; or to seek restoration by making known our wrongs to our Christian brethren, that they might assist us in procuring redress. The turpitude which the Conference are wishful to fix upon the members of the Association, in representing them as "*most wickedly*" endeavouring to injure the public funds of the Connexion, by the "stoppage of supplies," they think attaches exclusively to those whom they oppose: that all the guilt connected with such a measure, is chargeable upon those who, without consulting the contributors, diverted their contributions to the furtherance of objects to which they were averse!

But of all the topics to which the Reverend Assembly have adverted, the Delegates have been most astonished at their incaution in bringing into comparison the "publications" which, during the conflict, have appeared before the community; characterising those of the Association as attacking, "in the most unmeasured and bitter language, Wesleyan Methodism; and by means of the press carrying on and encouraging a regular course of slander and calumny, in reckless violation of the requirements of truth, of piety, of brotherly kindness, and even of common decency itself; being identified with a system of *periodical vituperation and abuse!*" Surely these "calm reviewers" have forgotten the character of certain publications with which the Conference press and Conference agents have inundated the kingdom; and the applauding terms in which the Conference preachers have spoken of the vulgar abuse and slanderous misrepresentations with which those productions have abounded, to the indelible disgrace of all parties concerned in them. To notice only one out of many similar publications; that choice specimen of Conference spirituality; that exemplification of meekness and gentleness; that pattern of heavenly-mindedness; that perfect model of brotherly kindness and charity; that vivid exhibition of all that is decent and becoming in polite society; that mirror of the gentle spirit and temper of Conference and its beloved children; that recently invented life-boat of the Wesleyan Connexion, launched upon the troubled ocean to rescue its sinking reputation, and pushed forward every fortnight: by all appliances of Methodist preachers in town and country - THE ILLUMINATOR!!! Have the "calmly reviewing" Conference forgotten that this, and similar choice productions, together with the publications which the Association has been constrained to circulate in self-defence, are now before an enlightened and Christian public, who will not fail to institute a fair comparison, and, independent of Conference authority, will pronounce who are best entitled to stand forward as the accusers of others, on the score of calumniating and slandering their Brethren. If there be one summary characteristic more than another by which the Association would rather abide the judgment of the public, it is that of the spirit, and temper, and language, and strict veracity, of its accredited publications! The truth, the justice, the righteousness of their cause, have saved them the necessity of condescending to employ such unhallowed and carnal weapons as those by which they have been assailed.

V. Amidst so much which is exceptionable in this Conferential document, we are, however, glad to find something which savours of the character of Christian ministers. Thus, "*in the fear of God,*" they tell us, that, notwithstanding their "deliberate and unalterable resolution," to abandon their former flock by thousands to the perils of the desert, without any attempt to rescue them; yet that they will have some regard to those who have not yet gone astray,—"to those among the dissatisfied portions of their societies, whom they willingly consider rather as the deluded and misled, than as the deluders and misleaders of the party. That it is their intention to take into consideration, at the earliest opportunity, some of the most material of those subjects of discipline which have of late excited the attention of the Connexion." Still, however, they are anxious to have it understood, how immeasurably far they are above listening to "any one of those *revolutionary* changes which the Association has demanded." Now, it is somewhat remarkable, how these reverend gentlemen could divine, what requirements "the adjourned meeting of the Delegates" were ultimately prepared to propose, had they been honoured with an interview. It is more than probable, that, instead of "*revolutionary changes,*" (with which the minds of the preachers seem to have been haunted) they would have found their proposals so reasonable, constitutional, and Scriptural, that they might have entertained them without any compromise of principle, or peril of their "divinely-appointed functions," and "those Scriptural powers which belong, of right, to the pastoral office;" whilst, at the same time, the rights and privileges of the people might also have been duly respected and secured.

Should, however, the Conference be constrained to improve to any valuable extent, "some of the *most material* of those subjects of discipline which have of late excited the attention of the Connexion," and enforce a more diligent pastoral visitation of the people than heretofore (which we hear may now be confidently expected), though these improvements should have been purchased at the expense of such costly victims as the Rev. Dr. Warren, and the Rev. Messrs. Emmett and Averill, together with hundreds of official characters, and thousands of private members of Society, who have been sacrificed in the struggle;—the acquirement of these advantages will be some recompense for the unmerited sufferings which these intrepid friends of liberty have cheerfully undergone, in procuring for those who may remain, a mitigated state of vassalage and slavery to that from which they have made themselves free.

VI. The Delegates may now congratulate the Methodist Connexion in the prospect of kindlier dispositions in their preachers, than they were wont to possess towards their oppressed members. For, implacable as they still resolve to be, towards the members of the "mischievous—Grand Central Association," the Conference, in their tender mercies, express a willingness to appoint "*proper persons*, members of their body, to converse freely and kindly, in order to afford friendly explanations and *pastoral counsel*," to those who may need it. The novel and interesting sight may therefore be expected, immediately after Conference, of Travelling Preachers diligently visiting even *the poor* of their flocks, in order to afford them spiritual instruction and consolation, and to preserve them from the perils to which they are exposed. Nay, such is the mitigated anger of the Reverend Fathers, that they have declared, that "*parties supposing themselves aggrieved or injured, by certain acts of local discipline, which have occurred during the last year, may actually be permitted* (provided they "will promise to refrain in the mean time from all hostile proceedings") to avail themselves of the mercy which will be vouchsafed to them by means of Special Deputations from the Conference to the Circuits concerned, which deputations, in conjunction with the *District Committee!!* shall be charged to enter upon a *fair and impartial* revision of those transactions, and to do *justice* to all parties." *Quære*, Are any of the 840 who have already pledged themselves to one side of the question, and signed a public Declaration to that effect, to be on the bench?

In this gracious proclamation, a somewhat curious circumstance is involved. Should "*some of the most material subjects of discipline*" have, in the mean time, undergone any considerable improvement, with what consistency will the Reverend Legislators appear before the public, in so modifying, altering, and interpreting the laws (by which they have just condemned vast numbers of their members) as to mean the very same thing, within a trifle, for which they contended; and, for which contest, whole hecatombs of victims have lately been sacrificed by them!

PREACHERS OF CONFERENCE,—

Can such counsels, can such dispositions, can such conduct as you have lately manifested, be of that God, whose ministers you profess to be? Do they at all assimilate you to that "Good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep?" who so tenderly "gathered the lambs with his arm, and carried them in his bosom?" who "left the ninety-and-nine in the wilderness, and went after that which was lost, until he found it?" In your case, without any imbecility of their moral or religious character: nay, on the contrary, with the testimonials of the whole church, of their piety, consistency of conduct, and zeal for the promotion of the glory of God,—on the preence of violating certain points of discipline in "Methodism, as at present constituted," you scatter those sheep which had been gathered with so much care and labour (not your own), and drive them from the fold, as though they had dishonoured their Christian profession by the basest crimes, or committed "the sin against the Holy Ghost!" the head and front of whose offending is, their bearing a conscientious testimony against your anti-Scriptural assumption of power; your lordship over God's heritage; your violation of the most solemn compact between you and the people; your reckless expulsion of your own ministers, as well as of the people, without any attempt to effect reconciliation, or even permission to approach you in order to state their grievances! Well might one of your most distinguished preachers,—lately deceased,—represent your system of government as having "*a radical defect*," and fraught with the most perilous consequences! Describing the exemplary character of an individual, whose memoir he was writing, THE REV. RICHARD WATSON thus proceeds:—"He understood, as well as any, the principles upon which a church should be governed, and the rights that they, as Christians, had to maintain. He discovered a *radical defect* in the old system [i. e., of Wesleyan Methodism]; a power *assumed*, not *delegated*, and exercised without limit and without accountability. A power, which, in the hands of infallible virtue, would have produced the most beneficial effects, but, in the hands of fallible men, is often made the instrument of *degradation* on the one part, and the support of *illegal and unchristian authority* on the other."

Posterity will scarcely credit the record, that, in the nineteenth century, in a country renowned for intellectual superiority, for civil and religious freedom, for every thing noble and generous in sentiment, and liberal in its institutions,—that, in *Britain*, in the very bosom of this free country, can be found a system of tyranny, under the profession of religion, beneath whose deadly shade, one of the most pernicious shoots, of the worst age of Popery, has been rapidly growing up! The almost sole circumstance left for gratulation among your preachers assembled in the present Conference,—that of your boasted *unanimity*, as in your late expulsions, your *ministerial murder* of your brethren! is, to every discerning and thoughtful person, the deepest stain upon your honour, the most fearful proof of your total corruption! Your unity is inspired by the genius of terror: your peace is the solitude of the desert!

You have, indeed, called to your aid a number of individuals whom you affect to represent as uttering the sentiments and views of the great mass of the *people*: that they are perfectly satisfied with things as they are; that they are desirous of no change—no improvement in the administration of "Methodism as at present constituted." But they are the representatives of the *few rich*, rather than of the poor. More correctly still, they are nearly the aggregate of that class of persons on whom the Conference think they can rely for pecuniary support, independently of the contributions of the poor and middling classes of society; by means of whose largesses you think you can carry out your plans of subduing every body, and every thing, to the absolute will and pleasure of a small faction in the Conference, and a few rich men out of it! Let not the great body of the preachers—let not even the few who fawn upon and flatter their wealthy supporters, be deceived! Those who are now so lavish of their gold, have accurately calculated the quantum of *power* they have purchased; which, if not duly yielded, will furnish occasion to the creditors to act the same part as one of old, who "laid hands on his fellow-servant, and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me that thou owest!'" Thus will those of you, who have so readily been allured by the glitter of a golden sceptre, prove it to be no better to you than a rod of iron, to enforce in turn your own humiliation and disgrace! a state of things which will be the more culpable and mortifying on your part, as the danger was so accurately pointed out to you by our venerable Father and Founder, the truly Rev. John Wesley, in the following remarkable words:—"Let all preaching-houses be built plain and decent; but not more expensively than is absolutely unavoidable: otherwise, the necessity of raising money will make *rich men necessary* to us; but, if so, we must be *dependent* upon them—yea, and *governed by them*! And then farewell to the Methodist discipline—if not doctrine too!"

Yet, though we thus speak, we know how to make due discrimination between the principal actors in the anti-Christian conduct which we feel it our duty to expose, and *those* who are unwilling instruments in the deeds of darkness which have lately been perpetrated;—*those* who are merely awed into silence during this Methodistical REIGN OF TERROR!! and which silence is trumpeted forth as a delightful proof of your *unanimity and brotherly love!* Degenerate sons of such fathers as erst occupied your places! how long will you be permitted by Heaven to scatter flocks which you never gathered?—to bear rule over God's heritage with a rod of iron? Are these the marks by which as a body you expect to be recognised as the legitimate pastors of Christ's flock! But we spare you; or, rather, we pity those of you who are subdued by the iron hand of oppression, and have neither independence enough to assert your own rights, nor virtue enough to advocate those of the people!

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,—

Our only, our last appeal, is to *you!* We are maintaining a conflict of Christian liberty against tyranny, of righteousness against oppression. Determined never to yield to the anti-scriptural assumption of power which Conference preachers have employed against us, we set at defiance their utmost anathema, and securely place ourselves under the guidance of the NEW TESTAMENT, and the protection of the "SHEPHERD AND BISHOP of our souls." But we ask, in the name of God, whether *you* can be satisfied with the measures which have been adopted against us; whether *you* think we have merited the treatment we have received at the hands of our preachers? Will *you* calmly stand by and witness your brethren and sisters by thousands thrust out from their lawful inheritance, from the consolations of Christian ordinances, from the advantages of Christian communion, without an effort to reclaim them? Will *you* allow an anti-Christian power, a persecuting priesthood, to wrest from *you* the last fragment of religious freedom, and fasten upon you a galling, an ignominious yoke of spiritual despotism? It is even *yet* in your power to rectify the abuses which threaten destruction to our beloved Methodism—the Methodism of a purer age. It is in your power—in your power alone, under the blessing of God—to arrest the progress of devastation and ruin which is rapidly advancing, and to restore peace and prosperity to a suffering church!

For ourselves, we entertain no fear! Ours is the cause of truth and righteousness; the promotion of scriptural, rational, religious liberty! You may, indeed, amidst the general improvement of society, stand still; or, by a perversion of your moral powers, render yourselves in-sensible to the clearest evidence of truth, of uprightness, and of integrity; you may retrocede into the darkness of the middle ages; but the shadows of a deadly night have been rolled back from the great portion of the civilised world: the morning light has diffused itself over the moral hemisphere; the sun of righteousness is advancing with irresistible progress towards his meridian glory. Neither the crafty policy of the ambitious, nor the powerful coalition of the rich and the great against the rights of the people, can resist the progress of knowledge, and the prevalence of liberal principles. The eventful year on which we have now entered, will probably decide the momentous question, Whether there remains within the great mass of the people who compose the Wesleyan Connexion, sufficient information correctly to appreciate their religious rights and privileges, and sufficient energy to assert them, against a rampant and ruthless domination, which sets at defiance all attempts to curb its exorbitant power? or whether reformation shall be pronounced hopeless, except by the more tardy, but not less certain, process of a gradual transference from the old body of all its valuable materials, for the reconstruction of a nobler edifice, whose foundations shall be as deep and as wide as the necessities of a universal church; and whose superstructure shall exclude all "the wood, and hay, and stubble," of merely human authority, and admit only "gold, and silver, and precious stones,"—such materials as will stand the strictest test of a *scriptural* examination now, and the last ordeal which it is destined to undergo, when "every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

To you, brethren, we refer the solemn responsibility of giving your consent, either by a careless indifference to what is passing, or by a timid acquiescence in the tyrannical expulsion of your unoffending brethren and sisters, from the bosom of a church which they love, by the pitiless denunciation of an exclusive Conference of preachers, armed with "irresponsible and irresistible power," sitting within closed doors, guarded by inquisitorial sentinels, unapproachable by those members of society who humbly implore the privilege of a final appeal to that reverend assembly! To you, we repeat—to *you* we refer the solemn responsibility of our excommunication, as you will have to answer for it, and as you desire to find mercy at the hands of your final judge; since it is in your power, and in your power alone (under God), to demand our restoration, by making our cause your own; and by *refusing*—till Conference comply with your demand—to countenance or support so cruel and tyrannical an exercise of authority, as that which has severed us from the body; and which now glories in its indisputed and absolute dominion over all who remain within the precincts of its jurisdiction.

(Signed)

GEORGE COOKMAN, Chairman.
R. B. GRINDROP, } Secretaries.
JOHN WOOD, }

Surrey-street Chapel, Sheffield, Aug. 6th, 1835.

